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RELIGIONSWISSENSCHAFT UND ARCHÄOLOGIE*)

VON

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Die Tradition ist also auch hier die fortpflanzende Mutter, wie Ihrer Sprache und wenigen Kulturen, so auch ihrer Religion und heiligen Gebräuche. Sogleich folgt hieraus, daß sich die religiöse Tradition keines anderen Mittels bedienen konnte, als dessen sich die Vernunft und Sprache selbst bediente, der Symbole.

Herder, Joh. G.: Ideen zur Philosophie der Menschheit, Leipzig-Wien, 1784, S. 293

Archäologie gehört, ähnlich wie die Religionswissenschaft, zu den relativ jungen Wissenschaften, deren Entstehung und Entwicklung mit der großen Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert zusammenhängt. Allerdings waren schon damals manche Erkenntnisse, die wir der Archäologie und der Religionswissenschaft verdanken, eng verbunden, und zwar nicht nur durch persönliches Engagement mancher Forscher, sondern durch sehr starke Verknüpfung der Themenkreise: wer hat schon damals entscheiden können, daß z.B. eine Untersuchung über Darstellungen der griechischen Mythologie¹⁾ sowohl zur Archäologie als auch zur Religionswissenschaft gehörte. Sogar heute ist es noch sehr schwer, eine scharfe Grenze zwischen diesen Wissenschaften zu ziehen, besonders da bislang keine methodologische Lösung einer Definition von Religionswissenschaft²⁾ und Archäolo-

*) Für Anregung zu diesem Artikel möchte ich hier Herrn Prof. Dr. G. Lanczkowski (Heidelberg) danken.

1) Vgl. dazu klassisches Beispiel: Winckelmann, J. J.: Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums, Weimar 1964 (1. Aufl. 1764) besonders S. 136ff.; 114-234; über diese Periode siehe: Hausmann, U. (Hrsg.): Handbuch der Archäologie (= HdA): Allgemeine Grundlagen der Archäologie, München 1969, S. 11-33.

2) Vgl. Holsten, W.: Religionswissenschaft (= RW), RGG³ V, Sp. 1038-1042 (Lit.); Bleeker, C. J.: The Future Task of the History of Religions, *Numen* 7 (1960) 221-234; Kishimoto, H.: An Operation Definition of Religion, *Numen* 8 (1961) 236-240; Ders.: Religiology, *Numen* 14 (1967) 81-86; Anm. 6 (Unten).

gie³⁾ vorliegt. Es wäre natürlich Verblendung zu sagen, daß das ein gegenwärtiges, spezifisches Problem der Archäologie oder Religionswissenschaft ist. Fast jeden Tag entstehen neue Disziplinen, und es wird immer schwieriger, von einheitlichen Wissenschaften zu sprechen. Das gesamte Problem, das zur Metawissenschaft gehört⁴⁾, läßt sich immer häufiger bei den sog. interdisziplinären Untersuchungen erkennen, die immer mehr Platz in weitgehenden Forschungen einnehmen⁵⁾.

Trotz dieser objektiven Schwierigkeiten wird hier versucht, eine Definition zu finden, die uns erlaubt, weiter die Unterschiede und Zusammenhänge zwischen Religionswissenschaft und Archäologie zu zeigen. Es gibt also verschiedene Auffassungen von Archäologie und Religionswissenschaft⁶⁾; wir wollen erst versuchen, die Archäologie einzuordnen, um ein möglichst klares Bild zu schaffen. Am deutlichsten läßt sich Archäologie durch ihre Aufgaben identifizieren, d.h. Archäologie soll aufgrund des Materials, das durch Ausgrabungen⁷⁾ zutage

3) Vgl. Hausmann, U.: HdA, S. 3-10; Wheeler, M.: *Moderne Archäologie* Hamburg 1960 (1. engl. Aufl. 1952) und dort von Bossert, H. Th.: *Archäologie in Zeitalter der Spezialisierung*, S. 227-235; Niemeyer, H. G.: *Einführung in die Archäologie*, Darmstadt 1968 (Lit.).

4) Vgl. Ramsey, I. T.: *Wissenschaft*, RGG³ VI, Sp. 1776ff.; Seifert, H.: *Einführung in die Wissenschaftstheorie*, 2 Bde, München 1970; Störig, H.-J.: *Kleine Welgeschichte der Wissenschaft*, 2 Bde, Frankfurt/M 1970; siehe auch Dempf, A.: *Die Einheit der Wissenschaft*, 1955.

5) Für uns wäre da zu erwähnen die interdisziplinäre Forschungsgruppe der Göttinger Universität für die Erforschung des Synkretismus (Westendorf, W.: *Die Göttinger Ägyptologie und die Göttinger Sonderforschungsbereich 13*, Göttinger Miscellen, Beiträge zu ägyptologischen Diskussion, Göttingen 1972, S. 52-55). Leider muß man bemerken, daß von unserem Standpunkt ein ganz wichtiger Teil des Synkretismus, d.h. die synkretistische religiöse Kunst, außer acht gelassen wurde, zumindest im bisherigen Hauptprogramm.

6) Vgl. Sammlung gemeinverständlicher Vorträge und Schriften aus dem Gebiet der Theologie und Religionsgeschichte, Tübingen 1965; Wach, J.: *Vergleichende Religionsforschung*, Stuttgart 1962; Rudolph, K.: *Die Problematik der Religionswissenschaft als akademisches Lehrfach*, Kairos 9 (1967) 22ff.; Edsmann, C.-M.: *Theologie oder Religionswissenschaft*, Theol. Rundschau N.F. 35 (1970) 1-32; Kitagawa, D.: *Grundfragen der Religionswissenschaft*, Salzburg 1963.

7) Ausgrabungen, die heute in verschiedenen Arten durchgeführt werden, bilden eine Methode, die typisch für die Archäologie ist, und deren Führung auch für die Richtigkeit der späteren Interpretationen keine unbedeutende Rolle spielt; im Gegensatz, die richtig geleitete Grabungen sollen von besonderer Bedeutung für die Datierung, für die Klassifizierung von archäologischen Funde, sein.

kommt, ein möglichst vollständiges Bild von vergangenen Kulturen liefern, wobei alle möglichen Dokumente zur Sprache kommen sollen, auch die schriftliche ⁸⁾, die dadurch nicht nur eine neue Interpretation finden können, aber auch Zugang zu bisher unbekannten Schriftsystemen ⁹⁾ eröffnen.

Es ist allgemein bekannt, daß jede Wissenschaft gegenüber anderen Wissenschaften die Position einer Hilfswissenschaft einnehmen kann. In unserem Falle wäre die Archäologie als Hilfswissenschaft für Religionswissenschaft, Geschichte oder Philologie anzusehen.

Was die Religionswissenschaft angeht, wird immer noch die Frage nach der Selbständigkeit der Wissenschaft lebhaft diskutiert ¹⁰⁾; das zeigt sich besonders daran, daß sie außerordentlich viele Verbindungen zu anderen Wissenschaften hat, die als Hilfswissenschaften versuchen, die Funktion und Geschichte der Religionen im Menschen- und Gesellschaftsleben zu verdeutlichen, gleichzeitig jedoch müssen sie sich der Methoden der Religionswissenschaft bedienen.

Bei unserem Versuch, die Bedeutung der Archäologie für die Erforschung verschiedener Religionen darzustellen, zeigen sich im Hintergrund Elemente einer neuen Sprache. Archäologisches Material operiert mit verschiedenen Formen der Kommunikation und Information ¹¹⁾ durch seine Aussagen: Kunst, Architektur, Keramik, In-

Unter Ausgrabungen verstehen wir alle bis heute benutzten Grabungsmethoden auf dem Lande und Unterwasser (Bass, G. F.: *Archäologie unter Wasser*, Bergisch Gladbach 1967²). Dabei ist zu bemerken, daß die Archäologie bei manchen Arbeiten die heutige Technik benutzt (Flugphotographie, Atomforschung, Mikroskopie etc). Vgl. Brothwell, D. & Higgs, E. (Hrsg.): *Science in Archaeology. A Survey of Progress and Research*, London 1969².

8) Von vorne rein muß gesagt sein, daß Archäologie nie behauptet hat, sie würde die Bedeutung schriftlichen Quellen negieren, vielmehr behauptet sie, daß heute jede historische Wissenschaft sich der Erkenntnisse der Archäologie bedienen muß.

9) Vgl. Virolleaud, Ch.: *Le déchiffrement des tablettes alphas. de Ras Schamra, Syria* 12 (1931) 15ff.; Bauer, H.: *Alphabet von Ras Schamra. Seine Entzifferung und neue Gestalt*, 1932; Gordon, C. H.: *Ugaritic Grammar*, Roma 1940.

10) Vgl. *Problèmes et Méthodes d'Histoire des Religions*, Paris 1968; Rupp, A.: Gedanken zu einer Religionsgeschichtlichen Anthropologie, *Numen* 17 (1970) 60-82.

11) Vgl. Cherry, C.: *Kommunikationsforschung — eine neue Wissenschaft*, Frankfurt/M 1969; siehe auch, *Archäographie*, *Ztschr. f. Kybernetische Methoden in der Archäologie*, bis jetzt 2 Hft. 1 (1970).

strumente, Kleidung u.ä.¹²⁾, diese (manchmal als kulturmaterielle Elemente¹³⁾ bezeichneten) Erscheinungen werden durch richtig geführte Ausgrabungen zum besonderen Zeichen einer archäologischen Sprache, die versucht, maximal alle Zusammenhänge zu prüfen, um eine gesamte Darstellung liefern zu können. Die heutige Archäologie wendet sich gegen die traditionellen Ansichten, daß Grabungen nur dafür durchgeführt werden um neue Antiquitäten auf den Markt zu bringen — es geht ihr um etwas anders: um das Verständnis des Kunstwerkes als eines integralen Teils einer Kultur, über die das Kunstwerk in archäologischen Kontextus mehr sagen kann¹⁴⁾.

Man muß darüber in klaren sein, daß nicht nur die Schrift¹⁵⁾, sondern auch andere Zeichen und Symbole gleiche, wenn nicht stärkere Aussagekraft haben. Gleichzeitig muß man in Auge behalten, daß die schriftliche Quelle im allgemeinen und besonders die religiöse Quelle oft auf Fälschungen¹⁶⁾ und mehreren Redaktionen beruht — sie sind auch oft erst später entstanden, als die verschiedenen religiösen Erscheinungen selbst¹⁷⁾.

Im Gegensatz dazu ist die archäologische Quelle die einzige lebendige Zeugin vergangener Kulturen und ihrer Religionen, ohne jene Zweideutigkeit, die einer schriftlichen Quelle eigen sein kann, wie

12) Unter diesen Umständen wird alles zu spezifischer Sprache, deren Interpretation und Grammatik noch in manchen Dingen weitere Forschung verlangt. Siehe dazu, Schweitzer, B.: *Strukturforschung in Archäologie und Vorgeschichte*, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, Tübingen 1963, Bd. 1, S. 179ff.; Kaschnitz von Weinberg, G.: *Ausgewählte Schriften*, B-d-e 1-3, Berlin 1965; Matz, F.: *Strukturforschung und Archäologie*, *Studium Generale* 17 (1964) 203-219.

13) Besonders in marxistisch orientierten Forschungen, vgl. Kulczycki, J.: *Zalożenia teoretyczne historii kultury materialnej*, *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 3 (1955) 3 S. 519-562; Majewski, K.: *Historia kultury materialnej. Przedmiot i metoda badań*, *Zapiski Archeologiczne* 3 (1953) S. 45, wo versucht wird, die Archäologie als nur einen besonders wichtigen Teil der neuzukonstituierenden Wissenschaft der „Materiellen Kulturgeschichte“ anzusehen.

14) Vgl. Szolc (Scholz), P.: *Das Kunstwerk als Ausdruck des Gottesglaubens*, *Byzantiniska Studier* (Stockholm) 4 (1971) 2.

15) Vgl. Jensen, H.: *Die Schrift in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Berlin 1968; Födes-Papp, K.: *Vom Felsbild zum Alphabet*, Stuttgart 1966 (Lit.); Diringer, D.: *The Alphabet*, London 1968³ 2. Bde. Hausmann, U.: *HdA*, S. 207-302.

16) Siehe dazu verschiedene mittelalterliche „Vitae“, wie auch die gesamte apokryphische Literatur. Rost, L.: *Einleitung in die alttestamentischen Apokryphen und Pseudoepigraphen*, Heidelberg 1971.

17) Vgl. Paret, O.: *Die Überlieferung der Bibel*, Stuttgart 1950; Würthheim, E.: *Der Text des Alten Testaments*, Stuttgart 1966.

z.B. bei verschiedenen Versionen mancher „Heiligen Schriften“¹⁸⁾. Man soll jedoch nicht den Eindruck bekommen, daß die schriftliche Quelle durch die archäologische Forschung in den Schatten getreten sei — nicht alle schriftlichen Quellen sind Konsequenzen einer Fälschung; es ist auch nicht zu vergessen, daß ohne bestimmte schriftliche Dokumente archäologische Forschung heute nicht solche Triumphe feiern könnte, wie sie beispielhaft H. Schliemann (1822-1890) in Troja beschieden waren — er fand Troja, indem er Homers Anweisungen folgte¹⁹⁾.

Deshalb wäre es auch falsch, von Religionsarchäologie²⁰⁾ zu sprechen, da es nicht Aufgabe der Archäologie ist noch sein kann, die Religion in allen Aspekten zu erforschen. Sie will das gesamte Bild einer Kultur liefern, wobei allerdings die Religion zweifellos eine primäre Rolle spielt. Man kann die Religion nicht nur mit archäologischen Methoden erforschen, da es keinen archäologischen Aspekt der Religion gibt²¹⁾. Bisherige Versuche haben deutlich gezeigt, daß die Archäologie für die vergleichende Religionsforschung besonders des Altertums zahlreiche Materialien bietet, die uns erlauben, eine Darstellung mancher Religionen zu geben.

Ein Überblick über die Geschichte der Archäologie²²⁾ könnte ihre Verdienste für die Religionswissenschaft am deutlichsten zeigen, wobei man sich im Klaren darüber sein muß, daß manche Periode der Religionsgeschichte in überwiegendem Maße durch die Darstellung der Archäologie²³⁾ — besonders im Falle der Religionen der unschriftlichen Kulturen der Vergangenheit — bestimmt ist.

18) Vgl. Lanczkowski, G.: *Heilige Schriften*, Stuttgart 1956; Widengren, G.: *Religionsphänomenologie*, Berlin 1969, S. 546-574 (Lit.).

19) Vgl. z.B., Schliemann, H.: *Ithaka, der Peloponnes und Troja*, Archäologische Forschungen, Leipzig 1869.

20) Siehe ein Versuch von, Finegan, J.: *The Archaeology of World Religion*, Princeton-New Jersey 1952. Das wäre ein ähnlicher Versuch wie beim Ursprung der RW, als man von Religionsphilologie gesprochen hat.

21) Vgl. z.B. Kotański, W.: Besprechung von J. Finegan, aaO..., *Euhemer* (Warszawa) 8 (1964) 93ff.

22) Vgl. Woolley, L.: *Ausgrabungen — lebendige Geschichte*, Köln 1960; Deuel, L.: *Das Abenteuer der Archäologie*, München 1967; Brion, M.: *Die frühen Kulturen der Welt*, Köln 1964; Hausmann, U.: HdA I, S. 11-161 (von Schiering, W.); Hrouda, B.: *Vorderasien I*, München 1971 (HdA), S. 14ff.; Rapport, S. & Wright, H.: *Archaeology*, New York 1963.

23) Vgl. Leroi-Gourhan, A.: *Les religions de la préhistoire*, Paris 1964; Kühn, H.: *Gegenwart und Vorzeit*, Frankfurt/M 1968, bes. S. 55-106. James, O.: *Prehistoric Religion*. New York-London 1957. Narr, K. J.: *Das Individuum in der Urgeschichte*, *Saeculum* 23 (1973) s. 252-265, bes. 257ff.

Nach diesen Ausführungen erscheint es gegeben, nun von prähistorischer Archäologie ²⁴⁾ zu sprechen, wobei für unseren Zusammenhang besonders der Felsmalerei eine wichtige Rolle zusteht. Die in Frankreich entstandene Felsmalerei-Forschung ist für immer mit Pater H. Breuil (1877-1961) verbunden, obwohl heute viele seiner Thesen in Frage gestellt werden ²⁵⁾.

Die heutige Forschung — die besonders unter dem Einfluß der strukturellen Archäologie steht ²⁶⁾ — konzentriert hier ihre Aufmerksamkeit auf die Felsmalerei. Besonders interessant sind in diesem Bezug die letzten Feststellungen von A. Leroi-Gourhan, der beinahe kanonische Ordnungen in den Kompositionen der paläolithischen Malerei nachgewiesen hat ²⁷⁾; d.h. wir haben es hier mit einer spezifischen Art von Kultusraum zu tun, die uns an die bis zur semantischen Perfektion geführten Ausstattungen des byzantinischen Kirchenbaus erinnert ²⁸⁾.

Aufgrund von prähistorischen Forschungen läßt sich sagen, daß wir vom Don bis zu den Pyrenäen auf die gleichen plastischen Ausdrucksformen stoßen; sie lassen sich primär religiös interpretieren und erklären ²⁹⁾; diese Kunst ist von 30 000 bis 9 000 v. Chr. in ihrem Inhalt unverändert geblieben ³⁰⁾, was nicht nur in religiöser, sondern auch in kultureller Einheit begründet ist. Das angesprochene religiöse Moment ist nicht erst mit der monumentalen paläolithischen Malerei aufgetreten, sondern läßt sich auch in den frühesten uns bekannten Bestattungsarten nachweisen, bei denen wir u.a. rot bemalte Knochen ³¹⁾ finden, die möglicherweise auch einen Weg zu eventuellen

24) Siehe dazu, Hole, F. & Heizer, R. F.: *An Introduction to Prehistoric Archaeology*, 1969²; Graziosi, P.: *Die Kunst der Altsteinzeit*, Stuttgart 1956; Kühn, H.: *Vorgeschichte der Menschheit*, 3. Bde Köln 1962-1967; Müller-Karpe, H.: *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte*, Bd. bis jetzt 1-2, München 1966-1968; Leroi-Gourhan, A.: *Prähistorische Kunst*, Freiburg (Herder) 1971.

25) Vgl. Leroi-Gourhan, A.: *Prähistorische. aaO.*, S. 41-60.

26) Vgl. Oben Anm. 12 und Schweitzer, B.: *Das Problem der Form in der Kunst des Altertums*, in Hausmann, U.: *HdA I*, S. 163-203.

27) Vgl. Leroi-Gourhan, A.: *Prähistorische. aaO.*, S. 19.

28) Siehe, Ouspensky, L.: *Symbolik des orthodoxen Kirchengebäudes und der Ikone*, in Hammerschmidt, E. (Hrsg.): *Symbolik des orthodoxen und orientalischen Christentums*, Stuttgart 1962.

29) Vgl. Giedion, S.: *Die Entstehung der Kunst*, Köln 1962, S. 69ff.

30) Vgl. Leroi-Gourhan, A.: *Les religions. aaO.*, S. 71.

31) Ebenda, S. 24.

ästhetischen Empfindungen anzeigen, die mit religiösen verbunden waren ³²).

Der Weg scheint von den bemalten Knochen zur mobilen Kunst zu führen, die sich in der Kultur weit zurückverfolgen läßt. Durch mobile Kunst ist u.a. der sog. Mutter-Erde-Kult faßbar geworden ³³), der mit den bekanntesten Beispielen der prähistorischen Kunst verbunden ist — als klassisches Beispiel wäre die „Venus von Willendorf“ zu nennen ³⁴). Die mobile Kunst hat zahlreiche Dokumente in kykladischen Raum in Form von Idolen hinterlassen, welche im privaten religiösen Leben, im Hauskult, eine wichtige Funktion besaßen ³⁵).

Es hat große Bedeutung für die Religionsgeschichte, daß, wie die Archäologie feststellen konnte, von Anfang der Menschheit an verschiedene Arten von Begräbnissen auftreten — wobei festzuhalten ist, daß die ersten kultischen Handlungen mit dem Totenkult verbunden sind ³⁶). Es ist auch kein Zufall, daß zahlreiche archäologische Forschungen ihr Hauptmaterial Entdeckungen auf verschiedenen Nekropolen verdanken. Diese im Rahmen der Archäologie spezifische Nekropolen-Forschung bietet einen besonders guten Einblick in den Totenkult der Vergangenheit. Aufgrund von Friedhofs-Untersuchungen können wir Aussagen machen über die historische Einordnung mancher Religionen in ganz bestimmte geographisch-kulturelle Räume, über die gesellschaftliche Funktion der Religion, über Fremdeinflüsse u.ä. ³⁷).

Die für die Erkenntnis der Religionen des schriftlosen Altertums so bedeutsame Archäologie spielte auch eine nicht unbeachtete Rolle

32) Vgl. Szolc (Scholz), P.: Das Kunstwerk. aaO., S. 4.

33) Vgl. Helck, W.: Betrachtungen zur großen Göttin und den ihr verbundenen Gottheiten, München-Wien 1971.

34) Vgl. z.B., James, O. E.: Religionen der Vorzeit, Köln 1960, S. 142ff.

35) Franz, L.: Mittelgriechische Steinzeitidole, Ipek 1932/33; Maier, R. A.: Neolithische Tierknochen-Idole und Tierknochen-Anhänger Europas, Berlin 1962; Helck, W.: Betrachtungen. aaO., S. 13ff.

36) Vgl. James, E. O.: Religionen. aaO.; Leroi-Gourhan, A.: Les religions., aaO.

37) Literatur zu diesem Themenkreis ist sehr zahlreich; es genügt hier auf manche Beispiele aus dem Mittelmeerraum zu verweisen, Field, J. N.: Archaeology and the after-life, London 1951; Settgast, J.: Untersuchungen zu altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen, Glückstadt 1963 (Abh. d. DAIKairo Ägypt. Reihe Bd. 3).

bei anderen religionsgeschichtlichen Forschungen. Das läßt sich sogar am Beispiel der Biblistik verdeutlichen ³⁸⁾, die sich infolge ihrer objektiven Gegebenheiten notwendigerweise nicht nur mit dem engeren Kreis der palästinensischen Geschichte beschäftigen mußte, sondern die gesamte Problematik des Alten Orients und der Antike ³⁹⁾ in ihren Rahmen einzubeziehen hatte.

Die Geschichte der Archäologie beginnt mit den Beobachtungen und Beschreibungen der ersten Reisenden. Diese Berichte gehören zur „Urgeschichte der Archäologie“. Einerseits bringen sie zum Vorschein, was in der Neuzeit (Ende 17. bis 19. Jh.) vernichtet wurde, andererseits zeigen sie dem nachkommenden Archäologen den Weg ⁴⁰⁾. Im Falle der Biblistik wurden solche Beschreibungen und Beobachtungen zu Fundamenten der kritischen Topographie Palästinas ⁴¹⁾, und ihre Erkenntnisse sind bis heute von Nutzen.

Die Archäologie im Orient ist eng mit den ersten Forschungen in Ägypten verbunden, die mit dem napoleonischen Feldzug (1798-99) zusammenhängen, da gleichzeitig ein ganzer Stab von Wissenschaftlern eine Forschungsreise unternahm. Ihre Ergebnisse ⁴²⁾ öffneten die Tore zur Ägyptologie. Dank der archäologischen Funde kamen nicht nur Denkmäler sondern auch schriftliche Dokumente zum Vorschein, deren Entzifferung dann J.-F. Champollion (1790-1832) gelang ⁴³⁾. Gleichzeitig wurde auch eine neue religiöse Welt, bisher

38) Vgl. Noth, M.: Grundsätzliches zur geschichtlichen Deutung archäologischer Befunde auf Boden Palästinas, *Palästinajahrbuch* 34 (1938) 7-22; Ders.: Der Beitrag der Archäologie zur Geschichte Israels, *Vetus Testamentum*, Suppl. 7 (1960) 262-282; Albright, W. F.: *Archaeology and the religion of Israel*, Baltimore, 1946; Keel, O.: *Die Welt der altorientalischen Bildsymbolik und das Alte Testament*. Köln-Neukirchen 1972.

39) Unter dem Begriff Antike verstehen wir hier Kulturen griechischen Provenienz-griechische, etruskische, römische und Hellenismus.

40) Siehe dazu, Weber, Sh. H.: *Voyages and Travels in the Near East made during the XIX century*, Princeton-New Jersey 1952; Ders.: *Voyages and in Greece, the Near East and adjacent regions made previous to the year 1801*, Ebenda 1953.

41) Vgl. z.B., Kraus, H.-J.: *Geschichte der historisch-kritischen Erforschung des Alten Testaments*, Neukirchen 1969² (Lit.); Pritchard, J. B.: *Die Archäologie und das Alte Testament*, Wiesbaden o.J.; Albright, W. F.: *Die Bibel im Licht der Altertumsforschung* 1967.

42) Vgl. *Description de l'Égypte ou Recueil des Observations et des Recherches qui ont été Faites en Égypte.....*, Paris 1821-1829, in 26 Bde.

43) Champollion, J.-F.: *Grammaire Égyptienne*, Paris 1836-41; Ders.: *Dictionnaire Égyptien*, Paris 1842/43.

meist nur durch Herodot bekannt, aus erster Hand dargestellt. Die neugeborene Ägyptologie konzentrierte sich stark auf das philologische Material⁴⁴⁾. Oft wurden die übrigen Materialien, deren Bedeutung keinesfalls zweitrangig ist, vernachlässigt und nur mehr als Schmuck von Museen und Privatsammlungen betrachtet.

Im Alten Ägypten hat sich, wie in keiner anderen Kultur, Architektur, Plastik und Malerei organisch mit der Schrift verbunden. Diese wurde ebenfalls zum ‚heiligen‘ Kunstwerk, das nur als Einheit mit anderen Kunsterscheinungen vollständig verstanden werden kann. Das läßt sich sogar soweit verfolgen, daß man schon z.B. in den Grabmalereien des Beni Hassan⁴⁵⁾ erste Merkmale einer Filmstruktur beobachten kann. In diesen Grabmalereien wird nicht nur ein Zyklus dargestellt, sondern jede einzelne Bewegung wird in allen ihren Phasen festgehalten.

Diese durch die Archäologie so vollständig entdeckte Kultur mit ihrer kanonischen Kunst, deren Merkmale sich deutlich in Architektur, Plastik und Malerei verfolgen lassen, hat eine Sprache herausgebildet, deren religiöser Charakter von primärer Bedeutung ist. Dennoch man muß sich aber fragen, ob wir es z.B. im Falle ptolemäischer Tempel (Philae, Kom Ombo, Edfu usw.) mit echter Kunst zu tun haben, da die in Erscheinung tretende matrizenhafte Arbeit⁴⁶⁾ nicht mit dem übereinstimmt, was wir unter Kunst verstehen⁴⁷⁾, das scheint wieder die These zu bekräftigen, daß nicht das Künstlerische sondern ‚Pragmatische, Kommunikative‘ in der Kunst Ägyptens herrschte; d.h. es mehr an Mitteilung (auch geheimer) als an künstlerhaften Ausdruck gelegen gewesen war. In der ägyptischen Kunst funktionieren kanonische Prinzipien; die Darstellung des Königs soll im ganzen Bild nicht nur immer dominieren⁴⁸⁾, aber wird sogar mit dem Gott-Bild gleichgesetzt⁴⁹⁾. Die Darstellungen mancher Gottheiten sind ikonisch geregelt, ein Tempel soll den Kosmos symbolisieren: der untere Teil

44) Vgl. Hornung, E.: Einführung in die Ägyptologie, Darmstadt 1967, S. 10ff.

45) Lit. dazu siehe, Portner, B. & Moss, R. L. B.: Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptien..., Oxford 1934, Bd. 4, S. 141-165.

46) Vgl. Woldering, I.: Ägypten, Baden-Baden 1962, S. 216.

47) Als Kunst wollen wir hier die originale Schöpfung verstehen; selbstverständlich ist die Diskussion darüber noch keineswegs als abgeschlossen zu betrachten.

48) Vgl. Königliche Darstellungen bei: Westendorf, W.: Das Alte Ägypten, Baden-Baden 1968; Michalowski, K.: Ägypten, Freiburg 1971².

49) Vgl. Michalowski, K.: Ägypten, S. 165ff.

versinnbildlich die Erde, aus der die Pflanzen (Papyrus, Lotos und Palme in Säulenform) hervorsprossen, die Decke ist das Himmelsgewölbe und mit Sternen und Göttervögeln bemalt ⁵⁰).

Es wäre natürlich falsch, zu behaupten, daß wir heute in der Lage wären, ein einwandfreies Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Symbole herzustellen ⁵¹), da uns zahlreiche Indizien noch unbekannt sind. Jedoch ist es uns möglich, Richtlinien und Inhalt dieser symbolischen Sprache, die uns in den Kunstwerken entgegentritt, anzudeuten ⁵²).

Aufgrund von Tempel- und Grabanlagen sowie der kultischen Darstellungen können wir uns ein Bild des religiösen Leben im Alten Ägypten machen — dieser Bild wird durch literarische Quellen vervollständigt ⁵³).

Manche Einzelheiten der ägyptischen Entdeckungen haben auch Ergänzungen zur biblischen Geschichte geliefert. Hierhin gehören nicht nur die Dokumente, die man in Winter 1887/88 bei Tell el Amarna ⁵⁴) gefunden hat — sie zeigen die politischen, ökonomischen und religiösen Verhältnisse im Alten Orient, die in den biblischen Berichten unklar bleiben — sondern auch die Funde aus der sog. Hyksos-Zeit, die nicht ohne Bedeutung für die Religionsgeschichte Israels geblieben sind ⁵⁵).

Eine ganze Reihe von Entdeckungen im Alten Orient, die hier nur kurz angedeutet werden können, enthalten nicht nur zahlreichen ugaritische ⁵⁶), hethitische ⁵⁷) und hebräische ⁵⁸) Dokumente, sondern

⁵⁰) Vgl. Kees, H.: Ägypten, München 1933, S. 155, 321 (in Rahmen des Hd. Altertumswiss. Hrsg. von W. Otto); Otto, E.: Wesen und Handel der ägyptischen Kultur, Berlin 1969, s. 118.

⁵¹) Vgl. Lurker, M.: Symbole der alten Ägypter, Weilheim 1964.

⁵²) Vgl. Volp, R.: Das Kunstwerk als Symbol, Gütersloh 1966 (Lit.).

⁵³) Vgl. Roeder, G.: Die ägyptische Religion in Texten und Bildern, 4 Bde, Zürich-Stuttgart 1960; Morenz, S.: Ägyptische Religion, Stuttgart 1960.

⁵⁴) Vgl. Knudtzon, J. A.: Die el-Amarna Tafeln, Vorderasiatische Bibliothek 2, Leipzig 1915.

⁵⁵) Vgl. Montet, P.: Fouilles des Tanis, Paris 1947-1960; Ders.: Le drame d'Avaris. Essai sur la pénétration des Sémites en Egypte, Paris 1941; Ders.: L'Egypte et la Bible, Paris (dt. Zürich 1960).

⁵⁶) Siehe dazu, Zsht.: Syria und Ugaritica.

⁵⁷) Die hethitische Schrift wurde 1915 von Prof. Hrozný entziffert, vgl. Friedrich, J.: Entzifferungsgeschichte der hethit. Hieroglyphenschrift, Stuttgart 1939.

⁵⁸) Zu den großen Entdeckungen unseres Jahrhunderts gehören die sehr bekannt gewordenen Funde von Qumran am Toten Meer; dazu auch ist eine zahlreiche Lit. entstanden, vgl. Burchard, Ch.: Bibliographie zu den Handschriften vom Toten Meer, Berlin 1957ff. und Revue de Qumran (Paris).

auch bildliche Formen, deren religiöse Aussage immer deutlicher wird. So läßt sich u.a. in der bildenden Kunst Mesopotamiens der Gilgamesch-Mythos (Epos) verfolgen ⁵⁹⁾, wie auch zahlreiche andere mythische Darstellungen, die ihren Ausdruck u.a. in verschiedene Tonsiegeln finden ⁶⁰⁾. Im Bereich der vorderasiatischen Kulturen ⁶¹⁾ sind die Religionen in erster Linie durch die Archäologie entdeckt worden, besonders was die frühen Religionen in diesem Raum betrifft. Es ist nicht zu leugnen, daß vom religionswissenschaftlichen Standpunkt aus an dem vorliegenden Material noch viel zu arbeiten ist, um das oft durch die Bibel beeinflusste Bild des Alten Orient umstrukturieren zu können ⁶²⁾.

Auch im Bereich anderer vergangener und weniger bekannter Kulturen und Religionen hatte die Archäologie ihren Anteil. Uns geht es nicht um einen vollständigen Überblick der gesamten Fundorte aller vergangenen Kulturen, das wäre in diesen Rahmen nicht möglich. Wir wollen nur noch bemerken, daß uns auch im Bereich der altindischen Kultur die sog. Harrappa-Mohenjo-Daro Kultur bekannt geworden ist ⁶³⁾, die beispielhaft Präelemente des frühen Wedismus zu zeigen scheint ⁶⁴⁾.

In dieser Art kann man fortfahren. Die Archäologie hat ein neues Licht auf die Religionen in Indochina ⁶⁵⁾, China ⁶⁶⁾, Japan ⁶⁷⁾ und Amerika (vorkolumbische) ⁶⁸⁾ geworfen. Ohne archäologische Forschungen wären unsere Kenntnisse des kultischen Lebens Mayas, ihrer Schrift und Geschichte äußerst dürftig. Schon die Fragmente, die im Dschungel von Yukatan in Erscheinung getreten sind, erlauben uns,

59) Vgl. Moortgat, A.: Die Kunst des Alten Mesopotamien, Köln 1967.

60) Vgl. Wiseman, Götter und Menschen im Rollsiegel Westasiens, Praha 1958.

61) Vgl. Moortgat, A.: Einführung in die vorderasiatische Archäologie, Darmstadt 1971; Hrouda, B.: Vorderasien. aaO.

62) Siehe dazu neue Ansichten in: Saeculum Weltgeschichte, Freiburg, Bd 1 (1965), Bd 2 (1966).

63) Vgl. Wheeler, M.: Alt-Indien und Pakistan, Köln 1959, S. 81ff.

64) Ebenda, S. 99.

65) Vgl. Krasa, M.: The Tempels of Angkor, London 1963.

66) Vgl. Hentze, C.: Funde in Alt-China, Göttingen 1967. Trésors d'art Chinois, Paris 1973.

67) Vgl. Kidder, J. E.: Alt-Japan, Köln 1959.

68) Vgl. Vaillant, G. C.: Aztecs of Mexico, Pelican Book 1950; Huber, S.: Im Reich der Inkas, Olten 1951; Anton, F.: Die Kultur des alten Mexiko, o.J.; Spraz, B.: Ergebnisse und Probleme der Erforschung vorspanischer Kulturen Mexicos, Saeculum 22 (1971) 326-333.

ein relativ wahrscheinliches Bild der Maya-Religionen zu entwerfen⁶⁹⁾.

Kehren wir nun zurück zum Mittelmeerraum, der uns nicht nur besser bekannt ist, sondern auch vom methodologischen Standpunkt aus genügend Beispiele liefert, die unsere Problematik in klarem Licht erscheinen lassen. In diesem Raum verband sich orientalische Tradition mit der Antike. Diese antiken Kulturen, relativ gut bekannt durch ihre schriftliche Überlieferungen, hatten ihre Religionen, wie dies die moderne archäologische Forschung gezeigt hat, in ausgeprägten Stereotypen in den griechischen literarischen Variationen vorgelegt. Dies stimmte aber nicht immer mit dem Wesen der eigentlichen Religion überein, da sie in diesen Überlieferungen literarisch banalisiert und poetisiert wurde. Forschungen im Bereich der mykenischen und frühgriechischen Kulturen⁷⁰⁾ liefern hier eine recht interessante Entstehungsgeschichte der griechischen Religion⁷¹⁾. In diesen Rahmen gehört die Erscheinung, daß Sagenbilder sehr früh in der griechischen Kunst vorkommen⁷²⁾, was auf ihre sehr alte Tradition schließen läßt. Untersuchungen und Analysen der Bildzyklen in der griechischen religiösen Kunst haben neue Wege in der Darstellung der griechischen Religion gezeigt⁷³⁾.

Oft haben archäologische Forschungen die Frage nach Entstehung und Einflüssen einer Religion zu beantworten versucht. Wir kennen das aus dem Bereich der römischen Religion, deren Ursprung bis heute nicht geklärt ist. Dies ist erstens eine Konsequenz der noch immer lückenhaften Etruskologie⁷⁴⁾ und zweitens beruht es darauf, daß die Römer — begeistert von griechischer Kultur und Religion — viele Versuche von Assimilation und Synkretismus unternahmen, um sich mit dem Griechentum identifizieren zu können⁷⁵⁾. Dieser Syn-

69) Vgl. Krickeberg, W.: Die Religionen der Kulturvölker, in *Die Religionen des alten Amerika*, Stuttgart 1961.

70) Vgl. Hülsen v. H.: *Funde in der Magna Graecia*, Göttingen 1962; Platon, N.: *Griechenland (Mykenische Periode)* München-Genf-Zürich 1969; Ders.: *Kreta*, Ebenda 1968.

71) Vgl. Taylour, W.: *New Light on Mycenaean Religion*, *Antiquity* 44 (1970) 270-280; Sakellarakis, J.: *Das Kuppelgrab A von Archaenes und das Kretisch-mykenische Tieropfergerritual*, *Prähistorische Zeitschrift* 45 (1970) s. 135-219.

72) Vgl. Hampe, R.: *Die frühgriechische Sagenbilder in Böotien*, Mainz-Athen, 1936.

73) Vgl. z.B., Simon, E.: *Die Götter der Griechen*, München 1969.

74) Vgl. Pallottino, M.: *Etruscologia*, Milano 1963.

75) Vgl. Schefold, *Römische Kunst als religiöse Phänomen*, Hamburg 1964.

kretismus, ohne Zweifel eines der wesentlichsten religiösen Phänomene der Spätantike, läßt sich nicht nur in zahlreichen Schriften verfolgen, sondern kommt am besten in den verschiedenen Kunstwerken dieser Zeit zum Ausdruck — besonders z.B. in der bekannten Diana von Ephesos ⁷⁶).

Die frühchristliche Kunst ist in dieser Beziehung ebenfalls ein repräsentatives Beispiel: hier zeigen sich deutlichsten Elemente einer Bildsprache, die ihre strengen kanonischen Züge im Bereich des östlichen Christentum bewahren konnte, während diese im Westen verloren gingen. Dieses frühchristliche Bildprogramm ⁷⁷), das gewissermaßen antike Vorbilder widerspiegelt, spielte in seiner Zeit eine vorherrschende Rolle. Es hatte nicht auf die Klärung mancher biblischen Geschichte (AT wie NT) einen Einfluß, sondern auch auf die Ausbreitung des Christentums. Das Bild hatte zweifellos die Funktion des LOGOS ⁷⁸), eine Funktion, welche u.a. zum Bilderstreit (7. Jh.) führe — wodurch die hervorragende Rolle der „heiligen Bilder“ noch mehr betont wurde. Um dies zu erklären, muß man den Ursprung der Bildtheologie berücksichtigen ⁷⁹). Sie ging von pragmatischen Gründen aus: die Mehrheit der damaligen Bevölkerung war analphabetisch, d.h. die neue Religion konnte nicht nur mit der Schrift, sondern in überwiegendem Maße durch andere sichtbare Elemente propagiert werden, durch Elemente, die auch dem Heidentum bekannt waren — hier bot sich das Bild an, das durch seine symbolische Sprachkraft imstande ist, mehr als das begrenzte verbale Wort zum Ausdruck zu bringen ⁸⁰). Dieser Entwicklungsweg der christlichen Ikonographie bot große Vorteile gegenüber den schriftlichen religiösen Überlieferungen. Das Bild war kommunikativ und universell, indem das Bild die religiöse Inhalte ohne Begrenzung vermittelte, die sonst in verschiedenen Sprachen in den Grenzen einer Sprache vermittelt werden können. Das hat auch für die Untersuchungen der patristischen

76) Vgl. z.B., Miltner, F.: Ephesos, 1958, S. 41.

77) Vgl. RAC 2 (1954) 287-346; RbK 1 (1966) 616-690; Grassi, E.: Macht des Bildes, Ohnmacht der rationalen Sprache, Köln 1970, S. 49ff.; Szolc, P.: Znaczenie i symbolika ikony, Studia z Historii Semiotyki 2 (1972).

78) Vgl. Volp, R.: Das Kunstwerk. aaO.; Grassi, E.: Kunst und Mythos, Hamburg 1957; Szolc (Scholz), P.: Das Kunstwerk. aaO. Ders.: Znaczenie. aaO.

79) Vgl. Campenhausen, v. H.: Die Bildfrage als theologisches Problem der alten Kirche, in: Das Gottesbild im Abendland, Witten 1959², S. 77-108.

80) Vgl. Tillich, P.: Symbol und Wirklichkeit, Göttingen 1966².

Zeiten große Bedeutung, vor allem, wenn man berücksichtigt, daß viele sog. häretische Schriften von den jeweiligen Siegern vernichtet wurden. Eine ausführliche Analyse der aus der Zeit vor dem Bilderstreit erhaltenen Bilddokumente ⁸¹⁾ zeigt deutlich die Tendenzen, die das Frühchristentum beherrscht haben. So ist danach auch anzunehmen, daß die frühchristliche Kultur mit gnostischen Denken verbunden war — dies kommt unter dem Eindruck der koptischen Literatur von Nag Hammadi ⁸²⁾ immer mehr zum Vorschein ⁸³⁾.

In der letzten Zeit erlauben eine ganze Reihe von neuen Entdeckungen im Bereich der christlichen Kunst, besonders in Nubien ⁸⁴⁾ und Äthiopien ⁸⁵⁾, eine vorläufige Rekonstruktion ihrer Einflüsse und Ausbreitung in Afrika, was in vielen Fällen die Geschichte der christlichen Mission bis zum 16. Jhd. ergänzt ⁸⁶⁾.

Die bis jetzt in erster Linie betonte Bedeutung der bildenden Kunst für die Religionsforschung, die durch archäologische Untersuchungen hervortritt, betrifft auch andere Funde. Und so lassen sich hier die Entdeckungen von verschiedenen Bauanlagen erwähnen, die anschaulich machen, wie die Sakralbauten ausgesehen und wie sie gesellschaftlich funktioniert haben, wie sie sich zu anderen Bauten verhalten; d.h. sie bringen eine Aussage über die Machtposition der Tempel und — damit eng verbunden — der Priesterschaft. Weiteres läßt sich in dem Bereich Phänomenologie beurteilen; besonders wenn man

81) Vgl. Szolc, P.: Some Problems of the Genesis of Painting in Faras, *Études et Travaux* 3 (1969) 200-206.

82) Vgl. Krause, M.: Handschrift und bei Nag Hammadi. Umfang und Inhalt, *Mitt. DAIKairo* 18 (1962) 121-132; Rudolph, K.: Gnosis und Gnostizismus, in *Forschungsbericht, Theol. Rund.* 34 (1969) 129-175, 181-231, 358-361 (Fortsetz. folgt). Colpe, C.: *JbAC* 15 (1972).

83) Vgl. Bertram, G.: Ev. Joh. 14,9 und das gnostische Christusbild, *Akten des VI. Intern. Kongr. f. christl. Archäologie* (Trier) Berlin-Rom 1965, S. 379ff.; Szolc, P.: *Zadzenie i symbolikaikony. Z. historii semiotyki* 2 (1973).

84) Vgl. Michalowski, K.: Faras. Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand, Köln 1967; Dinkler, E.: (Hrsg.) *Kunst und Geschichte Nubiens in christlicher Zeit*, Recklinghausen 1970; Szolc, P.: Pachoras — an Peripherie des antiken Christentum, *Antike Welt*, 3 (1972) 4.

85) Vgl. Gerster, G.: *Kirchen im Fels*, Stuttgart 1968 und 1972²; Szolc, P.: *Äthiopische Archäologie*, *Antike Welt* (in Druck).

86) Die noch immer nicht beendeten und weitergeführten Untersuchungen in diesem Raum zeigen deutlich, daß die Archäologie wichtiges Ergänzungsmaterial für die Religionsgeschichte des äthiopischen Raumes bringt, so daß das Bild fast mit jedem Jahr vollständiger wird. Vgl. 2. Auflage 1972 von Gerster, G.: *Kirchen*. aaO.

die Sakral-Gebäude geschichtlich verfolgt, stellt sich heraus, daß sie sehr oft ihnen religiösen Charakter bei verschiedenen Religionen behalten ⁸⁷).

Aber nicht nur die monumentalen Funde bringen aufschlussreiche Nachrichten über das Verborgene, über das Religiöse, auch die manchmal kleinen Terrakotten besagen etwas über die Popularität einiger Götter bei der breite Masse ⁸⁸); Münzfunde sind hier nicht ohne Bedeutung, wenn es um die Frage der Ausbreitung einiger Religionen geht. So kann man weiter verschiedene Funde aufzählen die im allgemeinen das lebendige Bild einer Religion vermitteln, nicht das Bild eines religiösen Systems, das in kanonischer und oft schriftlicher Form gefaßt ist und fast nie den pragmatischen in der Religionsgemeinschaft funktionierenden Erscheinungsformen entspricht.

Die Stellungnahme zu außerschriftlichen Dokumenten, die wir in diesem Falle archäologischen Arbeiten verdanken, wurde durch die Weiterentwicklung der Strukturforschung und Semiotik ⁸⁹) ermöglicht, was auch B. Schweitzer deutlich zum Ausdruck gebracht hat: „Keinem Zweifel kann es unterliegen, daß die Sprache der Kunst vergangener Zeiten eine eigene Sprache mit eigenen Zeichen, Formeln, Regeln ist, ja sogar eine fremde Sprache, deren Verständnis uns nur zum Teil gegeben ist und Schritt für Schritt methodisch erarbeiten werden muß . . .“ ⁹⁰). Die theoretischen Ansätze haben hier ergeben ⁹¹), daß jedes Dokument der menschlichen Tätigkeit eine semantische kategorisierbare Bedeutung hat, möglicherweise nicht so drastisch, wie dies E. Cassirer (1874-1945) fordert ⁹²); jedenfalls wird betont, daß außer der Sprache andere menschliche Zeichen (signa) imstande sind, ein kommunikatives System zu bilden, das in manchen Fällen an Bedeutung der verbalen Sprache gleichkommt.

87) Vgl. Deichmann, F.-W.: Frühchristliche Kirchen in antiken Heiligtümer, Jb. DAI 54 (1939) 105-136; Ders.: Christianisierung II, RAC 2 (1954) 1228-1241.

88) Vgl. z.B., Phillipp, H.: Terrakotten aus Ägypten, Berlin 1972.

89) Vgl. Heinle, P.: Sprache, Denken, Kultur, Frankfurt/M 1969; Lurker, M.: (Hrsg.) Bibliographie zur Symbolkunde, 3 Bde, Baden-Baden 1964-68; Eco, U.: Einführung in die Semiotik, Uni. Taschb. 1972.

90) Vgl. Schweitzer, B.: Strukturforschung. aaO., S. 181.

91) Vgl. Bocheński, J. M.: Logik der Religion, Köln 1968; Langer, S. K.: Philosophie auf neuem Wege. Das Symbol im Denken, im Ritus, in der Kunst, Frankfurt/M 1957.

92) Vgl. Cassirer, E.: Die Philosophie der symbolischen Formen, 3 Bde, Berlin 1923-29.

Diese theoretischen Ansätze haben traditionelle Tendenzen innerhalb der Archäologie wesentlich verändert, die ja lange Zeit als eine Hilfswissenschaft der Kunstgeschichte, manchmal sogar als Kunstgeschichte des Altertums verstanden wurde ⁹³⁾. Das heutige Verständnis von Archäologie erschliesst auch für die Religionswissenschaft neue Horizonte; sie bearbeitet besonders ernsthaft Probleme der religiösen Kunst, indem sie Ikonographie als wesentliche religiöse Quelle betrachtet ⁹⁴⁾ und ein Blickfeld auf das eröffnet, was die religiösen Schriften verborgen halten.

Zusammenfassend läßt sich feststellen, daß die Archäologie Erkenntnisse für frühere Religionen liefert, die oft unbekannt waren. Zahlreiche Materialien stellen nicht nur eine Ergänzung schriftlicher Quellen dar, sondern erlauben auch eine direkte Beschreibung der Kultstätten und Bestattungsgarten, das Tempelwesen und der Ausbreitung mancher Kulturen und Religionen. Das bedeutet daß die Archäologie für die heutige Religionswissenschaft eine Hilfswissenschaft darstellt, deren Ergebnisse für die Entwicklung und Klärung vieler Probleme unentbehrlich sind um eine vollständiges Darstellung einer Religion mit ihren Zusammenhängen mit der Kulturgeschichte zu ermöglichen.

93) Vgl. Winter, F.: Griechische Kunst, in Einleitung in die Altertumswissenschaft hrsg. von A. Gerke und E. Norden, Berlin-Leipzig 1912, Bd 2, S. 75.

94) Vgl. Haas, H.: (Hrsg.) Bilderatlas zur Religionsgeschichte, Leipzig 1925; *Iconography of Religion*, ed. Th. van Baaren, L. Leertouwer, H. Buning, Leiden 1970-.....; Keel, O.: *Die Welt der altorientalischen*

THE MESOPOTAMIAN FLOODSTORIES: A COMPARISON AND INTERPRETATION

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Introduction

Up until now three Mesopotamian floodstories have been discovered. The first one was published in 1873 and is part of the Gilgamesh-epic, written on its eleventh tablet, the lines 8-196¹⁾. In terms of time of composition however, this version of the flood is the latest, being composed in the twelfth century B.C. The second Akkadian floodstory, or better parts of it, have been known for a long time. However, the different pieces of the epic containing the floodstory have only recently been put together in an understandable way. The complete epic was published not long ago, in 1969, under the name: *The Atrahasis-epic*, with the subtitle *the Babylonian Story of the Flood*²⁾. The epic is named after the only human being who plays an active part in the story: King Atrahasis. All the other actors are gods. The epic, which takes up three tablets, on the third of which the floodstory is related, could as well have been called "The Story of the Revolt of the Gods and the Subsequent Creation of Man" (tablet I) or "The Story of the Plagues" (tablet II). The reason to single out for subtitle "The Flood" might have been that already two Mesopotamian floodstories were known, one in the Akkadian and one in the Sumerian language. This Sumerian floodstory is our third flood-text. It was written probably not long before 1600 B.C. and first published in 1914. In this article we use its translation by Civil³⁾.

1) R. C. Thompson, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Oxford, 1930) and W. von Soden, *Z.A.* 53 (1959), 232-233.

2) W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, *Atrahasis, the Babylonian Story of the Flood* (Oxford, 1969).

3) M. Civil, *The Sumerian Floodstory*, in Lambert and Millard, o.c., 138-145 and 167-172.

Generally the floodstory is interpreted as a story about destruction. Kristensen is the only one we know of who had a different view ⁴⁾. Now that there are not only new data about the story of the flood, but also about the Mesopotamian religion in general a re-examination of the floodstory is appropriate. In particular the publication of the Atrahasis-epic has provided the historian of religion with new material, unknown before. It is our intention to look in this article at the context of each of the floodstories, the contents of the stories themselves, and the differences between them. After that we will try to find out their meaning, using new material concerning the cosmological creation-stories.

Our interpretation of the floodstory as a story about destruction *and* re-creation is cautiously offered to the reader. We realise its provisional character. Time and again new data are found, which destroy existing explanations. Also, there is a shortage of data which makes it difficult for the student of the Mesopotamian religion to get a clear picture of which he can be sure. Lastly and most importantly, the distance in time and way of thinking between us and the world of Antiquity makes us run two kinds of risks. The first risk is inserting our ideas in the antique text, too eager to clarify what is difficult to understand because of its strangeness. The other risk is as bad: too impressed by the distance and otherness, one is not able to explain things at all. Sympathy with the Antiquity and a notion of relativity are our resources in evading these risks.

Before we proceed to the research proper, it is useful to look at what the Mesopotamians understood by a flood, because the English word flood does not give quite the correct picture of the phenomenon concerned.

The technical term for flood in Sumerian is *a.ma.ru.*, in Akkadian *abubu*. The Sumerian word is translated by Civil as "storm". The Akkadian word is translated both by the *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* and the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* as "flood, deluge". According to Jensen, the *abubu* indicates the moving water caused by a rainstorm or a storm which drives the seawater into land (or both). The *abubu* is not the inundation itself. In Gilg. XI 131 it is said: "The

4) W. B. Kristensen, *De Plaats van het Zondvloedverhaal in het Gilgameš-epos* (1915) in *Verzamelde Bijdragen* (Amsterdam, 1947), 7-14.

sea became quiet, the storm was still, the *abubu* ceased". While the earth is still inundated, the *abubu* has ceased according to the text ⁵⁾. When we look at the causes of the flood in the two Akkadian flood-stories, one mentions the raingod and the winds; the other adds to this the water caused to flow down by some gods from the heavenly ocean on earth. The Sumerian version says: "All the destructive winds (and) gales were present. The *a.ma.ru.* swept over the capitals". In all the versions there is a significant absence: neither Enki, pre-eminently the god of the water, nor his territory the Apsu, the subterranean water, is mentioned. All the floodwater comes from above. Thus the texts show us, that *abubu* is a rainstorm which brings about inundation. Although the common translation as flood is an unfortunate one, we will stick to it because of general usage.

The framework of the two Akkadian floodstories

In the Akkadian language the story of the flood can be found twice: once in the Atrahasis-epic and again in the Gilgameš-epic. Hereafter the version in the Atrahasis-epic will be abbreviated as A., the other one as G. Before paying attention to the contents of the versions, we will first have a closer look at the position of each of these stories within their epic as a whole.

The Atrahasis-epic runs thus: After a revolt of that group of gods which is tired of working for their daily bread and the bread of the other gods, who are their superiors, man is created by Enki and the Mother-Goddess. He is created in order to take over the work of the rebellious gods. Time and again the singer of the epic mentions that man is created in order "to bear the yoke and carry the toil of the gods". But mankind becomes numerous and noisy, and their noise disturbs Enlil's sleep. Therefore he tries to reduce the number of people; first by means of a plague, and the second time a famine. The measures do not have the desired result, because Enki counteracts the plans. Finally Enlil proposes that the gods extirpate mankind by a flood. With the exception of Enki, the gods approve of and support this drastic plan. But Enki advises Atrahasis, a pious king, to build a boat and thus save his life. Atrahasis does as he is told.

5) P. Jensen, *RLA*. Band I, 11-13.

Enlil is furious when he finds out that his plans have failed again. He realizes that the way in which he has tried to solve the problem of population-explosion, is not the correct one. He instructs Enki and the Mother-Goddess, the two gods who have created man, to regulate mankind in order to keep their multiplication within bounds. Enki and the Mother-Goddess determine the fate of the people. They decree that there will be the baby-snatcher demon and that some women will not be able or be allowed to bear children. In this way the organisation of the world is completed and the epic ends with a call to praise Enlil.

Some consider the first part of the epic a myth and the second part — from the moment mankind becomes numerous — a legend. There are however several reasons why this view is not acceptable. Firstly, the whole epic is placed in the sphere of what has been called “the holy”. Secondly, the mythic time is the time in which the creation and organisation of the universe take place; and the world of man with its institutions forms a part of the universe. The organisation is not yet completed when man is created, witness the regulations made after the flood. Thirdly, these regulations are typically myth-like in as far as the myth gives a precedent and example. This precedent and example is seen as the ultimate foundation and explanation. Like all myths one is also concerned with ultimate meaning. Therefore, the entire epic is a myth; the flood is a mythical happening, however historicized in later times.

Considering the course and the contents of the epic, it can be said that the framework of the floodstory in the *Atraḥasis*-epic is the creation of man and the completion of his world.

The *Gilgameš*-epic is a lengthy epic. The first part contains the encounter, the subsequent friendship and the adventures of Gilgameš and Enkidu, and the sudden death of the latter. The second part describes a mourning Gilgameš, desperately searching for an opportunity to escape death. After a long and dangerous journey he is able to see Utnapištim, his forefather and the floodhero. He asks him how he gained eternal life. Utnapištim tells him of the flood. He relates how he was saved because Ea advised him to build a boat; how after the flood the gods gathered around his offering and he was blessed by Enlil and granted eternal life. But Utnapištim ends: “Who will assemble the gods for you, that you will find the life you are looking for?”. The continuation of the story is not easily understood and

strikes one as paradoxical. On the one hand the impression is given that two real chances are offered Gilgameš to escape death. On the other hand the singer of the epic has assured us twice before with emphasis, that Gilgameš' wish is impossible and his effort doomed to failure. The opposition between Gilgameš' and Utnapištim's situation becomes more clear when we consider that the floodstory functions as the conclusion of the mythical period, and that the floodhero is the last person of the mythical times. For him it is still possible to be granted eternal life. But when Gilgameš lives the organisation of the world is completed, the fate of man fixed, and the relations and the conditions set. Gilgameš does not and cannot use his chances with success: mortality is mankind's share. The author concludes with the meagre consolation that by his deeds and his works man's name might be immortal.

The contents of the Gilgameš-epic show that the framework of the floodstory is Gilgameš endeavour and failure to escape death.

The course of the floodstory

After the description of the context of the two floodstories, which can be summarized as creation of man and organisation of his world for the Atrahasis-epic, and endeavour and failure to escape death for the Gilgameš-epic, we will turn our attention to the contents of the floodstory itself. The course of the story will be told on the basis of G. All scholars, except Kristensen ⁶⁾, consider the floodstory in the Gilgameš-epic as an episode, which is loosely connected with the rest of the epic. The only reason for its insertion in the epic, which is done quite harmoniously, is to explain Utnapištim's immortality. Their supposition that the floodstory already existed, either as a separate story or as part of a bigger whole, became confirmed by the recovery of the Atrahasis-epic. A. is considered as primary, G. as secondary.

Not only does a number of lines from G. (esp. 180-188) presuppose the Atrahasis-epic, but also in the latter the place and context of the floodstory are understandable and significant. The Atrahasis-epic, which dates from the Old-Babylonian period, contained the floodstory from the very beginning. As far as the Gilgameš-epic is concerned however, it was only in the twelfth century B.C. that a poet made a coherent epic out of the several stories, which centered around the

6) See note 4.

hero Gilgameš. And it was only then that the floodstory was incorporated in the epic. Although A. is primary and G. secondary, the later version is chosen here to render the story. The reason is that G. is better preserved, especially in the description of the flood itself.

A group of four gods has conceived the plan to bring about a flood. A reason is not given; it is possible to conclude from line 180 that punishment is one purpose, from line 182 the wish to diminish the number of people. Prince Ea, the Akkadian name for Enki, overhears the plan and passes it by means of a reed hut to Utnapištim, whose name means: "I have found life". Although Ea's message does not mention the flood, it is very clear: 'build a ship that you may save your life'. Utnapištim is prepared to comply, but foresees difficulties with his townsmen. Ea advises him to tell them: "Enlil does not want to have anything to do with me anymore. Therefore I am not able to live in his territory. I will descend to the Apsu and live with my Lord Ea. He (i.e. Enlil) will let it rain abundance upon you". This announcement is entirely correct, but leaves out that it not only applies to Utnapištim, but to all mankind as well: Enlil does not care for mankind any longer; living in his region — earth — is not safe anymore. The rainwater will wash away the ground and the people. Utnapištim builds the ship, sends property, family, animals, and artisans aboard and awaits the big moment. When he notices a frightful changing of the weather, he closes his ship and gives away his palace. A black raincloud makes its appearance at the horizon, gods walk around with torches and tear up the mooring poles, and the water-reservoir (i.e. the heavenly ocean) runs down on the earth. In the darkness the tempest rages and the earth becomes inundated. The gods escape to the highest heaven. The goddess Ištar regrets her decision, taken in the assembly of the gods, in favour of the flood, and she grieves over her people. The other gods wail with her. For six days and seven nights the storm continues, the flood continues. But on the seventh day: "the sea became quiet, the storm was still and the flood ceased". Utnapištim opens a hatch and, on seeing only water around him, weeps. The ship runs ashore on the summit of a mountain. After seven days Utnapištim releases a dove, a swallow, and a raven. When the raven does not return he knows that soil has turned dry. He unloads and brings an offering.

The gods gather over it like flies. Maḥ, a Mother-Goddess figure,

swears by her string of fly-stones that she will not forget this flood. She prohibits Enlil, the instigator of the flood, from approaching the offering. Enlil is angry when he perceives that someone has escaped and suspects — quite rightly — Ea to have borne a hand. Ea reproaches Enlil for acting with rashness; he suggests less drastic methods which could have been used to reduce the number of people. Ea defends himself by saying that he did not tell the plan directly, but showed it to Atrahasis in a dream. (Utnapištim is here suddenly called Atrahasis, which is the name of the floodhero in the Atrahasis-epic and which means: “the very wise one”.) Enlil then blesses Utnapištim and his wife: from now on they will be like gods and thus immortal.

Synopsis of A. and G.

No... means that although the full text at the corresponding place is preserved, the particular passage does not occur in that version. Elab. means that in one of the versions the same facts are recorded more elaborately. Pres. is the abbreviation for preserved.

<i>Motive and Plan</i>	A.	G.
motive for flood	not pres., prob. identical with II i 7-8	182-188 (indirect motives)
decision in favour of flood	II vii 31-52, viii 32-37 (elab.) (assembly of the Anun-naki-gods)	14-18 (four “great gods”)
<i>Warning by Enki</i>		
occasion	III i 11-19 (a dream)	no occasion
warning	III i 20-24	20-26
instructions for:		
1. shipping seed of life	no instruction	27
2. building boat	III i 25-33	28-31
announcement of rain	III i 34-35 (in 1 st pers. sing.)	43-47 (elab., in 3 rd pers. sing.)
fixing of term	III i 36-37	no fixing
objection of floodhero	no objection	32-35
speech to fellow-citizen	III ii 42-50	39-47 (elab., prompted by Ea)
<i>Preparation</i>		
building of boat	III ii 11-14 (hardly pres.)	48-79 (elab.)
inloading:		
1. property, family and animals	III ii 30-42 (species of animals elab.)	80-85 ^a

	A.	G.
2. artisans	no artisans	85 ^b
reaction floodhero at banquet	III ii 43-47	no reaction, no banquet
repetition announcement rain	no repetition	86-88
<i>The Flood</i>		
beginning	III ii 48-52	89-93
bestowing of palace	no bestowing	94-95
description of flood	III ii 53-55, iii 7-18 (badly pres.)	96-112
reaction of gods during flood:		
1. Enki	III iii 25-26	no reaction Enki
2. Anunnaki-gods	III iii 30-31, iv 15-22 (elab.)	113-115, 124-126
3. Mother-Goddess	III iii 32-54, iv 4-13 (large elab.)	116-123 (Ištar subject)
conclusion	III iv 24-27 (after 7 days)	127-131 (on the 7 th day)
<i>The Saved Man</i>		
reaction of floodhero	not pres.	132-139
running aground on mountain	not pres.	140-144
release of birds	not pres.	145-154
the offering	III v 30-32	155-158
<i>The Gods</i>		
reaction of gods to offering:		
1. their gathering	III v 34-35	159-161
2. the consummation	III v 36	no consummation
accusation by the Mother-Goddess	III v 37-50, vi 1-14 (elab., name Nintu)	162-169 (name Maḥ)
reaction of Enlil	III vi 5-10	170-173
reproach by Enki	III vi 16-18, 25-26 (badly pres.)	177-188
<i>Conclusion</i>		
immortalisation of floodhero	not pres.	189-196
instructions to regulate mankind	III vi 41-44	no instructions, no regulations

A. has about 413 lines: 174 lines are not preserved at all, about the same number is partly preserved and only 70 lines are completely preserved. This looks worse than it really is: the repetitious style of

the epic — which is the style of the Mesopotamian literature in general — makes the restoration of a very large part of the story possible.

G. has 188 lines, none of which is completely missing, and of which about two-thirds are completely preserved.

The differences between A. and G.

Even a superficial look at the synopsis displays several differences between A. and G. One of the most obvious is the differences in names. In A. the floodhero's name is Atrahasis, in G. Utinapištim; but once (line 187) the latter is called Atrahasis. A. has the Sumerian name Enki, G. the Akkadian Ea for the god of the Apsu-water. The name of the Mother-Goddess is Nintu in A., Maḥ in G. But let us have a look at the more important points:

1. As for space, the description of the decision in A. takes up 1/8 of the whole story; in G. this is only 1/37. As for responsibility, in A. the Anunnaki-gods⁷⁾ make the decision, probably on the proposal of Enlil — one of whose characteristic epithets is "Lord of the flood". They bind themselves with an oath to carry out the plan. Enki protests and does not want to be involved, but curiously enough gives directions for realisation of the plan. Whether he himself is also bound with an oath is not clear, but considering III vi 7-8 quite probable. In G. it looks at first as if only four gods, mentioned by name, plan the flood. But during the flood Ištar remarks (118-121), that she regrets to have pronounced the evil — namely the flood. (By pronouncing the evil she realises the flood, since the word of a god is a powerful word, which creates what it pronounces). Her remark discloses that the decision is taken in and by the assembly of the gods. It is not known of which gods this assembly consisted; maybe all, but Ea — as one of the main gods — certainly was a member. Thus, in both versions the decisive body is the assembly of the gods.

2. In A. the floodhero has a dream, the meaning of which he does not understand. When he asks Enki for an explanation, he is told of

7) The Anunnaki/u and the Igigi/u, two groups of gods in the Mesopotamian pantheon, are difficult to determine, as they are continuously changing qua number, composition, and place: see A. Falkenstein, *A.S.* 16 (1965), 127-141; B. Kienast, *A.S.* 16 (1965), 141-159; W. von Soden, *Iraq* 28 (1966), 140-145; E. Reiner and H. Gueterbock, *J.C.S.* 21 (1967), 255-266.

the flood. In G. Ea conveys the plan of the flood without a direct occasion; but G. 187 presupposes A. or a version like A.

3. In A. the use of the 1st pers. sing. in Enki's announcement of the flood is unexpected. Does the text intend to say that Enki will bring the rain? That would be strange and unlikely: Enki is indeed the god of the water; not of the rainwater, but of the Apsu, the water under the earth, which is comparable with our groundwater. Moreover, it is the very Enki who is against the flood. Lastly, in the parallel passage in G. the 3rd pers. sing. is used. A possible explanation might be that Enki is quoting literally and thus the lines III i 34-35 could be considered a standardized expression.

4. In A., unlike G., the day on which the flood will start is known: the eighth day after the announcement.

5. In A., unlike G., the floodhero's speech to his fellowcitizen is not prompted by Enki.

6. In the description of the loading of the ship, more attention is paid to the animals by A.; and unlike G., A. does not mention the shipping of the artisans.

7. The description of the flood itself differs quite a bit. The appearance in G. of all those gods who walk around with torches, tear up the mooring poles and make the heavenly ocean flow, is absent in A. But A.'s text is badly preserved; it might have mentioned their appearance, the more so as they are mentioned in Enki's directions for the execution of the flood. The description of the flood in A. emphasizes the workings of the weathergod and the winds. But although the description differs, the flood as such is of the same nature: a heavy rainstorm.

8. A. gives as much space to the reactions of the gods during the flood, as to their decision to bring about that violence. Each of these components covers 1/8 of the whole floodstory. Not only the reaction of the Mother-Goddess (who is in G. replaced by Ištar; see below for a possible explanation), but the reaction of Enki as well gets special attention. Enki is portrayed as being out of his mind and the Mother-Goddess expresses her grief extensively. From the description in A. it becomes clear why the gods are sitting together with feverish lips: mankind, destroyed by the flood, can no longer perform its duty to take care of the gods, i.e. to bring offerings. The gods are hungry and thirsty without the offerings, which are their food and their drink.

G.'s picture of the gods sitting together as dogs thus becomes sensible and sharp. Packs of hungry stray-dogs would probably have been a common view to the maker of the epic. Often this comparison — like the comparison of the gods with flies — is considered to show contempt of the gods. But the presupposition that the comparison of a god with an animal is more disdainful for him than a comparison with man has its home in our way of thinking. The text itself does not give any indication that the comparison is meant contemptuously. In G. the description of the reaction of the gods consumes 1/14 part of the whole story.

9. Again in A. much more attention is paid to the Mother-Goddess' doings: her accusation of Enlil as conceiver of the flood is rendered elaborately.

10. At the place where, because of the course of the story in G., the immortalisation of the floodhero might have been told, twelve lines are missing. So it is impossible to say whether the singer of the epic knows of the blessing and immortalisation of Atrahasis by Enlil, equivalent to that of Utnapištim in G. It does not seem likely however: twelve lines do not give much space for narrating this fact. And what is more, one gets the impression that the missing lines form part of Enki's reply to Enlil.

After the enumeration of the most striking differences between A. and G., an important but difficult question arises: Is there any consistency to discover in the differences? Would it be possible to conclude that each of the versions describes the events from its special viewpoint?

The aim of the poets becomes clear when we look at the elaborations and additions of one version with regard to the other.

G. is in two passages more elaborate than A.: when Ea prompts Utnapištim's speech to his fellow-citizen explaining his strange behaviour, viz. the building of a boat; in the description of the building of the boat itself. G. has the following six additions: the instruction to ship all kinds of living seed, the — very dramatic and emphasized — objection of the floodhero, the shipping of the artisans, the repetition of the announcement, the bestowing of his palace to a servant — a rather cynical deed —, and probably the floodhero's immortalisation. G. starts its story nearly on the very moment of Utnapištim's

appearance, and ends with his immortalisation. Precisely there, where Utnapištim is directly involved, the story is somewhat dramatized.

In A. the story begins with an extensive report of the tumultuous meeting, in which the decision of the flood is made and commented upon by several gods. It ends with the instruction to resettle the case of man. A. is on five points more elaborate than G.: in rendering the decision, in specifying the shipped animals, in showing the reactions of the Anunnaki-gods and the Mother-Goddess during the flood, and in the accusation by the Mother-Goddess after the flood. A. alone mentions: the occasion of Enki's warning, the fixing of the term, the floodhero's reaction at the departure-meal, Enki's reaction during the flood, the gods' consummation of the offering, and the instruction to determine fate.

The elaborations and additions of A. and G. can be brought under one denominator. In G. the story is told from Utnapištim's point of view: The emphasis and spotlight are on him, on his reactions and on his emotions. In A. the emphasis is given to the gods: The storyteller dwells at length on how they feel, what they think and why they act. Although the aim of the two versions is different, the contents are more or less the same.

The Sumerian floodstory and its differences from the Akkadian ones

In the Sumerian language too, a floodstory is preserved. It must have been composed between the Isin-dynasty (2000-1800 B.C.), when the theme of the flood became popular, and 1600 B.C., the approximate date of the tablet on which the story was written ⁸⁾. The story has about 300 lines, of which only 81 are preserved and from these 17 are again so fragmentary that no translation can be made. All together there remain 64 readable and reasonably understandable lines.

When the story becomes readable there seems to be an allusion to the annihilation of mankind, although it is only thereafter that mankind is created ⁹⁾. The first column tells of the creation of man by An, Enlil, Enki, and the Mother-Goddess. Enlil, who is creator in the cosmic tradition, and Enki and the Mother-Goddess, who create in the chthonic tradition, are put together in a syncretistic way. In the second column the institution of kingship and the foundation of five cities by a god,

8) M. Civil, o.c., 139.

9) See for a different explanation A. D. Kilmer, *Or.* 42 (1972), 161 ⁷.

presumably Enlil, are narrated. In the third column "the gods of the universe" — An, Enlil, Enki, and the Mother-Goddess — decide to bring about a flood. Inanna weeps for the people and Enki bethinks himself. Ziusudra, the Sumerian name for Atrahasis, with the same meaning namely "the very wise one", is introduced as a pious king. The fourth column covers the scene of Enki's warning. The flood is described in the fifth column. The last column tells of Ziusudra's immortalisation.

In comparing the Sumerian floodstory (abbreviated S.) with A. and G., we have two things to keep in mind: Firstly, that S. is only partly and badly preserved; and secondly, that much in Sumerian texts is still difficult to translate and to interpret.

1. In A. Nintu, a Mother-Goddess figure, weeps during the flood and grieves for her people. In G. her role is taken over by Ištar, who exclaims weepingly: "Although I have given birth to my people, like the spawn of the fishes they fill the sea." Ištar however does not play a proper part here, originally at least ¹⁰). She is not a Mother-Goddess: her function is not creator of mankind. But why the Mother-Goddess is replaced precisely by Ištar might be understood from S. In S. Inanna (the Sumerian equivalent to Ištar) weeps for the (not "my"!) people. In the preceding line Nintu is mentioned, but why and how, because of bad preservation, is not clear. G. can have had S., or a similar version, as example. At the time of G.'s composition, Ištar was the main goddess and had already taken over some of the functions of the Mother-Goddess. The writer of G. could compress the reactions of Inanna and the Mother-Goddess into Ištar, and in doing so, he did not feel that he altered the contents of his example.

2. In S. Enki is one of the four gods of the universe who decide on the flood. In A., quite probably, he joins in the decision but under heavy protests. In G. one initially gets the impression that Ea does not decide with the others. But indirectly we find that this in all likelihood is not true.

3. In S. Enki's warning is made in clear terms. The flood is mentioned by name, in opposition with A. and G.

4. In S. and A. the flood goes on for seven days and seven nights; in G. it lasts a day less.

¹⁰) See W. von Soden, *R.A.* 52 (1958), 131-136.

5. In S. after the flood the floodhero prostrates himself before the Sun. In G. he simply prostrates himself — before whom is not stated — and weeps. In A. this passage is not preserved.

All in all, the differences between S. and the two Akkadian versions are not very important. We are justified in saying that the contents of S. roughly conform with these of A. and G.

An interpretation of the floodstory

Since the publication of the floodstory in the Gilgameš-epic, many have devoted time and energy to translating the text and understanding its meaning. The recently edited Atrahasis-epic is an enormous help in the endeavours of interpretation. Here the floodstory has its original 'place'. Then, the Atrahasis-epic is older than the Gilgameš-epic. And lastly, precisely by their deviations the two versions clarify each other. For an analysis of the floodstory, the text and the context of the Atrahasis-epic is of great importance.

The end of the Atrahasis-epic is preserved. The epic concludes with a hymn to Enlil: "For your praise let the Igigu hear this song and extoll your greatness to one another. I have sung of the flood to all the peoples. Hear it!". This hymn after a story in which so much destruction has been discussed and carried out, surprises the reader. One has supposed ¹¹⁾ that Enlil is praised because he consents to a new creation of man. But the text says that the Igigu-gods praise Enlil because of the hymn and the subject of the hymn is the flood. Obviously the flood is a happening, according to the author, which gives the Igigu reasons for praise. How can that be? Has it not been related in the first tablet of the epic, that man is created in order to take over the work of the Igigu, after the Igigu-gods refused to slave any longer? The destruction of mankind cannot possibly have been something pleasant for the Igigu; but it is precisely they who are summoned to praise. The question arises whether it is possible that the flood does not, or not only, mean the destruction of mankind, but something else too.

In endeavours to determine this "something else", we think that the article of J. van Dijk: "Le Motif Cosmique dans la Pensée Sumé-

11) W. von Soden, *Iraq* 28 (1966), 143.

rienne" ¹²⁾ is of great relevance. It indicates the scope within which the floodstory has to be understood. Its analysis of the cosmological creation-stories helps to clarify the character and the essence of the floodstory. Van Dijk shows that the events in the Sumerian cosmogony are grouped around the expression *u₄.ri.a.* = illo die = that day. "That day" is the day on which the vegetation, the fauna, and man also originate. Violence is the most important characteristic of "that day": "Even more than the flood, 'that day' is the prototype of all destructive violence." (pg. 21). The violence is not only destructive, but also and at the very same time constructive, creative as well: "The day of the 'terra parturiens' is the day of violence pre-eminently." (pg. 21). In other words, when the Sumerians considered the origin of the world, they associated in the cosmological tradition the creation with primeval storms, forces and violence. The creation was simply unthinkable without violence. And when they thought about the origin of mankind, they believed that man was created on "that day", *u₄.ri.a.*, on that stormy and turbulent day, characterized by violence. Violence and creation are to be seen as two concepts which are very closely connected and which evoke and implicate each other. That is the outcome of van Dijk's study.

When we return to the floodstory with this in mind, a new aspect appears. The very characteristic of the flood — like "that day" — is violence. This violence refers, like every violence, to the violence of creation, to the day that the earth gave birth. Every violence has two aspects, the creative and the destructive one. The violence of the flood does not only destroy, but creates as well. Certainly, mankind is annihilated during the flood-violence. But that is only one side. In the form of the saving of the floodhero, mankind is re-created in the very same violence. Most scholars only had an eye for destruction. Only Kristensen defended — on false grounds ¹³⁾ — the concept of the floodstory as a story about rebirth and re-creation. We do not agree with the majority of scholars: in their view the call to praise, the instructions

¹²⁾ J. van Dijk, *An. Or.* 28 (1964-1965), 1-61.

¹³⁾ Firstly, the floodstory cannot be the third description of the journey of the sun through the underworld, witness its appearance in a completely different setting in the Atrahasis-epic. Secondly, Kristensen relies on an incorrect translation of parts of a myth, nowadays known as the "Tilmun" or "Enki and Nin-hursanga" myth, and hence identifies wrongly the floodwater with the Apsu-water.

for regulations, and especially the striking resemblance of the flood-violence with the creation-violence are unaccounted for. Neither do we agree with Kristensen: the moving grief of the Mother-Goddess is hard to ignore. Our interpretation is that the floodstory tells of destruction and re-creation of mankind, both in and by the very same violence. This seems to be a contradiction to our logical mind: a story cannot contain two opposite themes at the same time. The Mesopotamians acknowledged indeed a conflict between the two aspects of the story, witness Enki's protests and Enlil's anger. But the fact that ideas are contradictory or opposite, does not mean to the antique mind, that they exclude each other. Two different things can be true at the same time, since for them truth and reality are many-sided and inexhaustible.

Destruction and creation, both caused in and by the very same act is the story of Gilgames XI and the third tablet of the Atrahasis-epic. The end of this epic, the context, and last but not least the part played by Enki and the Mother-Goddess indicate that we are justified in using the cosmological creation-stories as relevant material in our interpretation of the floodstory.

Firstly, when apart from destruction the flood indicates the creation of mankind, the call to the Igigu-gods that they should praise Enlil on account of the flood is appropriate. But we wonder at the object of the praise. Is it not Enki who actually re-created mankind by saving the floodhero and should he not get the thanks instead of Enlil? This particularity however has its close parallel in Enuma Eliš, the creation-epic. In En.El VI 33 it is again Enki who actually creates man; but it is Marduk¹⁴) who is praised for this deed: "Now, o Lord, thou who has caused our deliverance, what shall be our homage to thee?" (VI 47-50). The end of the epic becomes not only intelligible, but has a close parallel in Enuma Eliš as well, when we interpret the floodstory as a two-sided story with a creative and a destructive aspect.

The second indicator is the context of the epic. The place occupied by the flood in the course of the events strengthens the interpretation that the flood is at the same time creation, or to be more precise: re-creation: After man is created and the years pass by, the situation

14) Enlil is here replaced by Marduk; see Th. Jacobsen, *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man* (Chicago, 1946), 169.

goes amiss: the people become too numerous and make too much noise. The gods realise that they arranged the matter improperly. They decide, after failing in attempts to diminish the number of people by way of a plague and a famine, on a flood. They wish to destroy what exists and in the same destruction re-create Atrahasis as the start of a new era, as the beginning of a renewed creation. After the flood it is not necessary for Enlil to give instructions for re-creation, since in the person of Atrahasis mankind is already re-created. He merely charges Enki and the Mother-Goddess to provide better regulations for this renewed creation, so that from now on — with human multiplication kept within bounds — the matter will be finished. In G. the concept of renewal is indicated in the shipping of the artisans. The culture goes through death and is thus re-created. It is important to see that the floodhero does not evade the flood and escape from death, but that he conquers the flood and goes through death.

Lastly, the part played by Enki and the Mother-Goddess consolidates our interpretation. These two gods create man in the first tablet of the Atrahasis-epic. Precisely *they* choose the side of mankind in the flood-story. Enki's support is explicit: by his very warning the floodhero is able to conquer the flood. Separate attention is paid to Enki's reaction during the flood: he is beside himself on seeing "his sons" (i.e. the people) thrown down. And after the flood he matches Enlil's anger and reproaches him for unjust behaviour. As for the Mother-Goddess, when she is mentioned — and we pointed out already that that happens proportionately often and in great detail — she also defends and weeps for mankind. She weeps during the flood, and she accuses Enlil after the flood. It is not by accident however, that it is Enki and the Mother-Goddess who act as they do. And what is more, it is not because they should be the friendly gods, in opposition to a malevolent god like Enlil. To start with, the conception of Enlil as malicious towards man is a rather common, but superseded and incorrect one¹⁵). But a more fundamental point is that to the people of Antiquity one god is not more friendly or malicious than another. They neither impose on their gods moral standards, nor do they classify their gods in categories of good and evil. Each god acts according to his nature and is worshipped for the sake of his nature, be it "good" or "bad". A god is not revered

15) S. N. Kramer, *The Sumerians* (Chicago, 1967), 119.

because he is "good" -- look for instance at Erra or the Egyptian god Seth --, but because his nature constitutes the cosmic order; in other words: because he is a god. One might say that the role of a god is fixed, because his function cannot but correspond with his nature. If the saving of Atrahasis means in a transformed way the re-creation of Atrahasis, it becomes clear why nobody but Enki should give him the warning that saved him; why nobody but Enki and the Mother-Goddess stand for man. They are the ones who create man in the first tablet, and they are the ones who re-create in the third, because "creator of man" is their function.

It should be recalled however that they do join the others in the decision to bring about a flood and that they carry as much responsibility as the other gods, although Enki protests heavily and the Mother-Goddess explicitly regrets her decision afterwards. This contradictory behaviour of Enki and the Mother-Goddess is caused by the existence of two plans at the same time. At first sight the two plans seem to be opposite, but in reality they need each other to be carried out. The saving of the floodhero, brought about by Enki's plan, is a creation which can only take place during and within the violence of the flood; and the flood is Enlil's plan. Without the violence, man could not have been re-created: Enki's plan could not have been carried out without Enlil's plan. Together they make the one divine plan of re-creation and completion of the world. In this divine plan each god plays his own role, in accordance with his nature.

The floodstory tells of the one divine scheme of destruction and re-creation in order to complete the world of man and its organisation.

THE TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION
OF THE TWELVE TERMS
IN THE PAṬICCASAMUPPĀDA

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Abbreviations

A.	Anguttara Nikāya	S.	Samyutta Nikāya
D.	Dīgha Nikāya	Sn.	Sutta Nipāta
Dhp.	Dhammapada	Thag.	Theragāthā
Dhs.	Dhammasangani	Thig.	Therīgāthā
Itv.	Itivuttaka	Ud.	Udāna
M.	Majjhima Nikāya		

The immediate question may be asked: “What is the *Paṭiccasamuppāda*?” And the further inquiry may then be made: “Is it *really* necessary to enter into the semantics concerning its terms?” The answer to the first question can be found in the following text:

And what, bhikkhus, is the *Paṭiccasamuppāda*? Dependent on ignorance (*avijjā*) (there are) the volitional sustenances (*sankhāra*); dependent on the volitional sustenances (there is) consciousness (*viññāṇa*); dependent on consciousness (there is) name-and-form (*nāmarūpa*); dependent on name-and-form (there are) the six bases (of the senses) (*saḷāyatana*); dependent on the six bases (there is) reaction (*phassa*); dependent on reaction (there is) feeling (*vedanā*); dependent on feeling (there is) craving (*tanhā*); dependent on craving (there is) grasping (*upādāna*); dependent on grasping (there is) becoming (*bhava*); dependent on becoming (there is) birth (*jāti*); dependent on birth, old-age (*jarā*) and death (*marāṇa*), sorrow (*soka*), lamentation (*parideva*), dis-ease (*dukkha*), grief (*domanassa*) and tribulation (*upāyāsa*) arise. Thus there is the arising of this whole aggregate of *dukkha*. This, bhikkhus, is called arising. (S. II.1).

An answer to the second question is given in another text:

He who sees the *Paṭiccasamuppāda* sees the *Dhamma*;
He who sees the *Dhamma* sees the *Paṭiccasamuppāda*. (M. I.190).

With the latter text in mind it can be said that an understanding of the terms in the *Paṭiccasamuppāda* (P-s) can lead to a better under-

standing of the Buddhist teachings as found in the Pāli texts. And also, there will be a better understanding of how these twelve units can be said to be conditionally dependent on each other; though space does not allow us to enter into a discussion of this matter at this time.

However, before we turn to the various terms, it is necessary to include a caveat. Dr. W. Stede recognised the difficulties that lie in any attempt at translating words found in ancient languages, and one can do no better than quote some of his words:

In all our dealings with literary documents of the past we are confronted with words, and we do not know what these words meant to those who used them, because we are not born and bred into these words: they are not part of our life-experience, they are more or less phantoms... Our view is so totally different from the view of the first users of ancient words that we necessarily move in a fog of self-deception.¹⁾

If follows from this, therefore, that few translations can be regarded as being absolutely correct. However, although this observation may indeed be true, it is not the *translations* of some of the following terms that is a matter for dispute. The difficulty arises mainly with their *interpretations*. Thus, although translations have been found for all the terms, more attention must be paid to the qualifying remarks which will usually be made, since the English words do not as a rule carry the correct connotations that are necessary for the contexts in which they appear.

Avijjā

In spite of Dr. Stede's words, it would be little more than pedantic to argue concerning the translation of this word. The obvious one, and the one most often used, is "ignorance". The two synonyms for *avijjā*, which will be used in this section, will be translated differently: *aññāṇa* as "nescience" and *moha* as "delusion".

This ignorance is not that which is to do with an individual's lack of knowledge in some branch of the sciences or other part of academic study. It was the Buddha's concern only to teach people that which was of supreme benefit to them, i.e., that which would lead them to enlightenment and eventual release from this sorrowful, weary world of

1) "The Self and Its Complications" in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. XX, 1948, p. 652.

rebirths. As can be seen from the incident of the *siṃsapā* leaves,²⁾ it was sufficient for one to know the handful of knowledge that the Buddha was offering, rather than waste life-times accumulating the veritable forest of knowledge that no doubt could be the possession, in the Buddhist view, of any enlightened person. The reason for the Buddha's avoidance in teaching this other knowledge is purely pragmatic: it is not necessary for the living of the good-life, and the attaining of enlightenment and *nibbāna*.³⁾

Ignorance, therefore, is the individual's unawareness that he is in any evil state whatsoever merely by the fact that he exists. It was the Buddha's realisation that there were such things as old-age, death and sickness that produced the deep shock necessary for his eventual enlightenment. It is ignorance of what constitutes this evil, and how to remove oneself from it:

What, bhikkhus, is ignorance? It is that which is nescience (*aññāna*) of *dukkha*; the nescience of the arising of *dukkha*; the nescience of the cessation of *dukkha*; and the nescience of the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. (S. II.4).

In the *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* there is found the condition for ignorance, which is the *āsavas* ("influxes").⁴⁾ Previous to this, *avijjā* is explained as ignorance of the Four Truths, and then it is stated how the cessation of ignorance, through the cessation of the *āsavas*, may be brought about. This is by means of the Eightfold Path. When the noble disciple has understood ignorance, then:

having given up every inclination to passion, having removed the inclination to repugnance, having abolished the inclination to the view of 'I am', having renounced ignorance and obtained knowledge, then there is an end of *dukkha* in this world. To this extent, friend, the noble disciple has right view, and his view is upright (so that) he possesses absolute faith in the *Dhamma*. He then comes to this very-*Dhamma* (*saddhammam*). (M. I.54).

In an *Itivuttaka* text ignorance is referred to as a hindrance (*nīvaraṇa*), and is therefore the reason why each individual goes from one life to another. It is only through the destruction of this "mass of

2) S. V. 437.

3) S. V. 438.

4) M. I. 54. Here, and elsewhere, a Pāli word has been pluralised in the English manner (i.e., by adding 's' to the Pāli stem form).

darkness" (*tamokkhandha*) that this process of rebirth can be stopped.⁵⁾

Since *avijjā* and *moha* are synonyms — this could be seen from a full quotation of the *Itivuttaka* text just mentioned — it follows that a definition of the latter is equal to a definition of the former. In the *Dhammasangani* we find *moha* defined in the following manner:

Nescience concerning *dukkha* (and the other Truths); nescience concerning the past (and) the future (and both); nescience concerning this being conditioned by that (*idappaccayatā*) among things dependently arisen (*paṭicca-samuppannesu*); such nescience concerning wrong view, insufficient understanding, not knowing the truth... non-restraint, non-penetration concerning foolishness, stupidity, non-attention, delusion, bewilderment, infatuation, ignorance, the flood of ignorance... delusion concerning the root of evil. (*Dhs.*, para. 1061).

With the existence of these and other texts it is small wonder that *avijjā* has found itself coupled with various derogatory epithets. For example, it has been called "the direst of bonds" (*sammā bandhanā*),⁶⁾ "the greatest stain" (*avijjā paramam malaṃ*);⁷⁾ and in a parable in the *Sunakkhatta-sutta* reference is made to the "ill-effect of the poison of ignorance" (*avijjāvisadoso*).⁸⁾ Finally, we have it put to us that ignorance is the main reason for the moral decay of a man; and, conversely, knowledge is the reason for his release:

Knowledge is the best among things that arise;
Ignorance is foremost among things that fall. (*S. I.42*).

How then does one give up ignorance and gain knowledge? The answer is to give up the ignoble path which is dominated by sensual lust, and an overpowering desire to possess wealth and property, which are conventionally described as pleasant, and which are seen by the unlearned lay-man to have an intrinsic ability to make him happy and contented. For the Buddhist ignorance is *almost* entirely made up of the various shades of the conventional truth that the world is, on the whole, a good place in which to be. In order, therefore, to destroy this superstition, the Buddha and his followers resorted to giving a literal — and thus an unrefined — description of that which is possessed by

5) Itv., p. 8.

6) M. II.44.

7) A. IV.195 and Dh.p., v. 243.

8) M. II.256.

all: the body. As a consequence of this phenomenological standpoint two results will accrue. The body of a woman will no longer be desired, and thus one of the prime urges in man will have been avoided. Also, in realising what must be termed the virtual obscenity of actually existing, the other prime urge will be avoided: that of self-preservation. This last assertion is made on a more literal and wider basis that it would have in the West. To put it another way: there would be no desire to preserve the self both in this life and in others following, neither in this world nor in the various heavens. With this, of course, will be included the destruction of any desire to obtain the so-called material advantages in the world. And all this renunciation leads not only to the gaining of knowledge, but also to the loss of worries and griefs.⁹⁾

All that has been said in the preceding paragraph can be summed up in the two Pāli expressions *kāma-taṇhā* and *bhava-taṇhā*, that is, respectively, “craving for sensuous pleasures” and “craving for becoming”. But there is one other form of craving left (in this context), and that is *vibhava-taṇhā*, “craving for non-becoming”. It is true that the ultimate aim of the Buddhist is to attain *nibbāna*, and therefore not to be reborn any more. But the subtle paradox exists that this must not be desired, since desire or craving is a thing of this world, and its existence in the mind, whether it be for things in this world, or for *nibbāna*, or for *annihilation*, will achieve the same result: rebirth. If then, through knowledge (in the Buddhist sense) the individual can erase his craving, it is only then that he can work toward not being reborn.

In the *Anguttara Nikāya* there is a text which states that there is no beginning to *avijjā*:

Bhikkhus, the beginning of ignorance is not perceived, so that it may be said: ‘Formerly ignorance did not exist, then afterwards it arose’. (*A. V.113*).

This text, taken indiscriminately out of context, could easily suggest that *avijjā* is some cosmic primaeval cause of the world. And it would follow, therefore, according to this argument, that special significance may be given to the P-s., since this begins with *avijjā*. Such was the view of Schayer, who referred to the P-s. as a “kosmische Emanations-

9) See Sn., vv. 1106-1107.

formel" degraded into a "primitiv Biologie".¹⁰⁾ However, the remainder of this text shows the fallacy of this theory: "But it may be perceived that ignorance is dependent on this (or that)".¹¹⁾

More specifically, it is further stated that ignorance occurs because there are the five hindrances, which are in turn dependent on the three wrong actions (*tīṇi duccharitāni*) in thought, word and deed.

In summing up, *avijjā* can be stated to be ignorance of the Four Truths, the Eightfold Path, the impermanence of all things in the world, of what craving for material things actually entails, and ignorance of the P-s.¹²⁾ Ignorance does not allow one to see the world, and man's state in it, as they really are. On the other hand, the essence of knowledge is to see the world divorced from preconceived and conventional notions. This leads to dispassion and the giving up of any wish to obtain material possessions.¹³⁾

Saṅkhāra

This term is a difficult one, both in the matter of translation and in interpretation. Concerning the latter, we will be looking at several texts in order to arrive at some explanation. But with regard to the former, the task seems a formidable one; and Dr. Stede's words are more appropriate than ever.

The translations of the other terms in the P-s. vary little, if at all. But with this term it seems that each scholar chooses his own translation. There are, therefore, many examples that could be cited. The following are but a few of those that the present writer has found: impressions, conformations, formations, dispositions, aggregates, mental activities, volitional acts, composite-unity, pre-natal forces, co-operating forces, synthesis, karmic form-energy and affirmations.

Two eminent scholars, G. P. Malalasekara and W. Stede, have similar opinions concerning a translation of this term. The former describes it as "a difficult word to translate, since it means various things in various contexts", but its etymological meaning may be given

10) "Vorarbeiten zur Geschichte der mahāyanistischen Erlösungslehren" in *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Buddhismus*, Vol. V, p. 235. Quoted in *History of Buddhist Thought*, E. J. Thomas, London, 1933, p. 79.

11) A. V.113.

12) See, for example, S. II.14-15.

13) See S. II.82.

as “what is put together as a composite thing”.¹⁴) And Dr. Stede’s opinion is that *sankhāra* (and *viññāṇa*) cannot be translated at all, “since the reality underlying these concepts baffles understanding.”¹⁵) Nevertheless, an attempt will now be made to try to find some word(s) which, with the necessary qualifications, will be of some service in the translation of this very enigmatic term.

In S. II.4 there are said to be three *sankhāras*: the *sankhāra* of the body (*kāyasankhāra*), the *sankhāra* of speech (*vacīsañkhāra*) and the *sankhāra* of thought (*cittasañkhāra*). The meaning of this threefold division is brought out in a passage found in the *Cūḷavedallasutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. Here the bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā is speaking to her former husband Visākha, while teaching him concerning this matter:

In-and-out breathings are the *sankhāras* of the body, friend Visākha; deliberation and reflection are the *sankhāras* of speech; perception and feeling are the *sankhāras* of thought... Because, friend Visākha, in-and-out breathings belong to the body, these states are (irretrievably) bound up with the body... Firstly one reflects and deliberates, and then one says something... Perception and feeling belong to thought, these states are (irretrievably) bound up with thought... (*M. I.301*).

With this text in mind the beginnings of a translation for *sankhāra* suggests itself: “sustenance”. The reason for this suggestion is that, so far at least, the main idea is that of supporting and nourishing, so to speak. Without the sustaining power of these states, the body, mind and speech would not continue.

The last quotation is followed by Visākha asking concerning “the attaining of the cessation of feeling and perception” (*saññāvedayitani-roddhasamāpatti*). Dhammadinnā replies that the bhikkhu is led naturally into this state by his mind without his thinking about it. As he enters this state the *sankhāra* of speech ceases first, followed by that of body and then mind. On his leaving this state the respective *sankhāras* return to him in the reverse order.

There is nothing astonishing about this matter — indeed, the order is the logical one — except that it is admitted here that a bhikkhu, who is capable of attaining trance, possesses *sankhāras*; and yet a glance

14) “Some Aspects of Reality as Taught in Theravāda Buddhism” in *The Indian Mind*, C. A. Moore (ed.), Honolulu, 1967, p. 85, fn. 8.

15) Loc. cit., p. 653, fn. 1.

at the P-s. will show that from the cessation of *avijjā* there should come the cessation of the *sankhāras*. In addition to this, even the Buddha is shown as possessing *sankhāras*: "Als er ein bestimmtes Wunder tun wollte, 'gestaltete er einen solchen auf das Wunder gerichteten Sankhāra', dass die betreffende Wirkung erreicht wurde." ¹⁶⁾ Furthermore, in the *Mahāparinibbānasutta* the Buddha, at his last meeting with Māra (the Evil One), tells him that within a short period of time he would leave the world. After this we are told: "Then the *Bhagavan* . . . being conscious and mindful, gave up the sustenance of life (*āyusankhāra*) . . ." ¹⁷⁾ From this and other texts we are then to suppose that not all the *sankhāras* are given up when *avijjā* is destroyed. The *sankhāras* sustaining the physical existence of the body in this life continue, but only in the fashion of a potter's wheel which will continue to spin for a short time after the potter has finished his task.

Our understanding of this problem is further helped by the following text:

Those sustentances of life, friend, do they belong to the feeling-states, or (are they both different)? The sustentances of life, friend, do not belong to the feeling-states. (If they did, then) the emerging of the bhikkhu who has attained the cessation of feeling and perception would not be evident. (However, they are different, therefore his emergence is evident.) How many states, friend, leave this body, (so that) this body is cast away, rejected, and has the condition of a senseless piece of wood? Three states leave this body, friend: life, heat and consciousness . . . What is the difference between this dead (body) and the bhikkhu (described above)? The dead (body's) sustenance of the body has ceased, become quieted; (and so for) the sustenance of speech and thought, life is extinct, its heat is extinguished, and the faculties have broken up. The bhikkhu's sustentances of the body, speech and thought have ceased, become quiescent when he attains the cessation of feeling and perception, (but) the life is not extinct, the heat is not extinguished, and the faculties are clear. (*M. I.295-296*).

If this text is understood properly the interpretation of it would be that there are in all, so far as this quotation is concerned, four *sankhāras*: *āyusankhāra*, *kāyasankhāra*, *cittasankhāra* and *vacīasankhāra*; and the first is not in the same class as the other three. The latter are destroyed in the particular state of trance referred to, but the former must necessarily exist so long as the bhikkhu lives. The *āyusankhāra* contains

¹⁶⁾ H. Oldenberg: *Buddha, Sein Leben, Seine Lehre, Seine Gemeinde*, (Herausgegeben von Helmuth von Glasenapp) Stuttgart, 1959, p. 257.

¹⁷⁾ D. II.106.

the life, heat and consciousness of the individual, and none of these can be given up until the fruit of his past *kamma*, has been exhausted. And, in order that there should be no more *kamma*, the other *sankhāras* must be, and can be, controlled.

Mention is made in *S. II.82* of “meritorious *sankhāras*. This may seem to be a contradiction in terms until the following text is read:

Here, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu possesses faith... morality... learning... munificence... and insight. And he thinks thus: ‘Oh that I may be reborn among the wealthy *khattiyas* when the body breaks up after death.’ (And so) he assumes that thought; (then) his mode of life being thus, the *sustenances* which are developed and practiced lead to that (particular) rebirth... (*M. III.99-100*).

The Buddha then continues in the same vein for several forms of existence that the bhikkhu may desire. Finally, however, the bhikkhu wishes for release through thought and insight (*cetovimutti*, *paññāvimutti*), which entails the extinction of the “influxes” (*āsavas*). Because of his success in this matter — due ultimately, it must be added, to his possession of the five previously mentioned *sankhāras* — “the bhikkhu is not reborn anywhere, he is reborn nowhere”.¹⁸⁾

Two points may be drawn from this text. The first is that there are *sankhāras* which can be a positive aid to release from rebirth. The second point is that the bare term “sustenance” is not by itself sufficient to translate *sankhāra*. The present writer would therefore suggest that “*volitional* sustenance” brings out better the meaning of the word. It is the will to do any action that has played a paramount role in Buddhism. That which sustains the body, for example, is the breath, because if the body was without this for even a short period of time it would die. Also, as can be seen from the bhikkhu’s ability to attain trance, the breath, although among ordinary lay-people it is a reflex action, is still under the control of the will since it can be stopped. And more clearly, deliberation, reflection, perception and feeling are manifestly bound up with the volitional part of the individual.

This volitional aspect of the *sankhāras* is particularly well brought out in the following text:

What, bhikkhus, are the *sankhāras*? They are, bhikkhus, these six groups of the will (*cetanā*): the intention concerning forms... sound... smell... taste... touch and mental states... From the arising of reaction (*phassa*) (there

18) *M. III.103*.

is) the arising of the *sankhāras*; and from the cessation of reaction (there is) the cessation of the *sankhāras*. The noble eightfold path is the way, the road to the cessation of the *sankhāras*, that is, right view, etc.. (S. III.60).

Finally, two further texts may be referred to in support of the suggestion that *sankhāra* should be translated — if at all — by “volitional sustenance”. In S. II.66 it is said:

That which one thinks (*ceteti*), bhikkhus, that which one determines (*pakapeti*), and that which obsesses one (*amuseti*), this is the condition for the continuance of consciousness.

In another context argument might be made concerning whether this text was extant before or after the formulation of the P-s. with twelve terms. Such a matter need not concern us at this time, however, since in either case the text still shows that *sankhāra* includes not only volition but also sustenance, for the text continues: “When there is this condition, then there is the *support* for consciousness.” And in S. III.96-97 two things are said concerning *sankhāra*. The first is that the “consideration” (*samanupassanā*) of the man who sees the body as *atta* (“self”) is a *sankhāra*. The man’s volitional activity, therefore, sustains him for as many rebirths as he holds this opinion. It is also stated that the *sankhāra* is born from craving (*taṇhā*). It is thus easy to consider how craving can give rise to a certain attitude of mind which entails the wish, i.e., the will or volitional act to obtain something, given in the first instance that the man possesses the delusion concerning the body, that it is a beautiful thing, which necessarily discolours his view of the material world.

Viññāṇa

As with *sankhāra*, *viññāṇa* is capable of more than one interpretation. One of these, which is supposed to be specifically concerned with the P-s., is given as follows:

And what, bhikkhus, is consciousness? There are, bhikkhus, these six groups of consciousness: eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness and mind consciousness. (S. II.4).

However, the validity of this interpretation — in the context of the P-s. — may be disputed. Strictly speaking, this is the discriminating consciousness that is found described in various texts. As such it is a part of the already existing psycho-physical entity. It distinguishes

(*vijānāti*) happiness (*sukha*), dis-ease (*dukkha*) and lethargy (*aduk-khamasukha*); and if there is any difference between this and understanding (*paññā*), then it is that the latter should be developed and the former should be accurately known.¹⁹) On a more mundane level, so to speak, it further distinguishes different sorts of taste, such as sour, bitter, acidic, honey, alkaline and non-alkaline, salty and non-salty tastes.²⁰) It is, therefore, this consciousness which is meant in the following text:

From the arising of name-and-form (there is) the arising of consciousness; (but) from the cessation of name-and-form (there is) the cessation of consciousness (by means of the eightfold path). (*S. III.64*).

For the P-s. to make any sense, therefore, the *viññāṇa* which is the third unit should properly be *paṭisandhi-viññāṇa*, “rebirth-consciousness”. And it is this consciousness which is referred to in the *Mahānīdāna-sutta*, which deals with the P-s. with nine terms:

If, Ānanda, consciousness did not appear (*okkamissatha*) in the mother’s womb, would name-and-form arise in the mother’s womb?

No, sir.

If, Ānanda, when consciousness has appeared in the womb, it should (then) disappear, would name-and-form be born (*abhinibbattissatha*) in this condition (or “world”)?

No, sir.

(And) if, Ānanda, consciousness is cut off from a young person, either a young boy or young girl, would name-and-form exhibit increase, growth and full development?

No, sir.

Wherefore, Ānanda, this is the condition, this is the basis, this is the arising, this is the dependence of name-and-form. (*D. II.62*).

With reference to this rebirth conception of *viññāṇa* the heresy of Sāti must be looked at, since it may be of some help if we can see just exactly what his mistake was. When he was brought to the Buddha the latter asked him:

Is it true, Sāti, that you have produced such an evil theory, to wit: ‘Thus I understand the *Dhamma* taught by the *Bhagavan*, that *this* consciousness, and no other, runs on, returns again and again?’

Yes indeed, sir.

Sāti, what is consciousness?

That, sir, which speaks and feels, which experiences the fruits of good and bad *kamma* here and there.

19) See M. I.292-293.

20) See S. III.87.

From whom, you stupid man, do you know that I teach such a *Dhamma*? In many ways, you stupid man, I have said that consciousness is dependently arisen (*paṭiccasamuppannam*); without a condition there is no arising of consciousness. (*M. I.258*).

On the following pages it transpires that the consciousness which the Buddha is referring to is that which arises from the eye, ear, etc.²¹) Therefore, it could be suggested that he is contradicting Sāti on two points. The first is that there is no stable, transmigrating consciousness. The second is that consciousness is entirely dependent on the psycho-physical entity for its arising, and is called by the name of the particular sense-organ concerned. But the consciousness that Sāti seems to have been referring to is that which is found in the *Mahānidāna-sutta* quoted above. Therefore, the answer to his assumption is not the correct one. It is not that he believed in the existence of a rebirth-consciousness that was his mistake, but that he regarded it as an unchanging and permanent entity. To give the proper answer to Sāti's assertion reference can be made to an *Itivuttaka* text, which states that "consciousness is of the nature of fading away" (*viññāṇam virāgaḍhammam*).²²)

As a means of relating these two concepts of *viññāṇa*, the following text may be quoted:

A monkey goes about this five-doored hut,
It wanders around by (each) door,
Beating repeatedly against (them).
Stand, monkey, do not run away;
For you it is not to be as it formerly was;
By wisdom (*paññāya*) you are restrained,
You will not go into the future (again). (*Thag., vv. 125-126*).

The interpretation of this simile is quite straightforward. The monkey is consciousness, which is constantly related to the five sense organs of the eye, ear, etc.. But an enlightened person has control over this ordinarily capricious faculty, hence its former habits are curtailed, and it is checked from running forward into the future at the death of that person. We thus find in this text an intrinsic connection between rebirth-consciousness and the consciousness which discriminates the various phenomena in the material world. But this should not be regarded as a contradiction to that which has been previously stated, i.e.,

²¹) *M. I.259-260*.

²²) *Itv.*, p. 69. See also *S. II.94-95*.

that the composer of *S. II.4* is wrong. The rebirth-consciousness that must be meant in the P-s., since it is prior to the psycho-physical entity, is nevertheless also found in the latter as a preparation for a new being, and its function is enhanced by its connection with that consciousness which is bound up with the sense organs.

The text given below, taken from the *Visuddhimagga*, 'explains' the process of rebirth:

Being bent by craving and thrown by the activities by way of continuity, it abandons the former basis like a man who crosses a conduit by hanging to a rope tied to a tree on the hither bank, and proceeds by the causes such as the object and so on, reaching or not reaching the latter basis set up by karma. And here the preceding consciousness is called decease because it passes away; the latter consciousness is called rebirth because it is connected with the beginning of another existence. *But the consciousness does not arrive here from a previous existence; nor does it appear from thence without a condition such as karma, activities, the bending onto the object and so on:*

The echo may be (taken) and such similes.

Because the series is continuous,

*There's no identity nor otherness.*²³⁾

The last line is further explained by noting that if all things remained the same there would, for example, be no such thing as curds from milk; and if things differed completely from each other, again there would be no curds.

Nāmarūpa

The more common translation for this term is "name-and-form"; and this may be kept for the additional reason that it is the more literal translation. However, explanations are needed concerning the rather enigmatic word *nāma*, "name".

Generally speaking, *nāma* involves the four incorporeal (*arūpa/arūpin*) *khandhas*, viz., perception (*saññā*), feeling (*vedanā*), *saṅkhāra* and consciousness (*viññāṇa*) — the fifth *khandha* being *rūpa*. But the definition given of this term within the context of the P-s. does not seem to allow this to be the case:

What, bhikkhus, is name-and-form? Feeling, perception, intention (*cetanā*), reaction (*phassa*) and attention (*manasikāra*), this is called name. There are the four elements, and on account of (*upādāya*) the four great elements (there is) form ... (*S. II.3-4*).

²³⁾ Translated by Pe Maung Tin: *Path of Purity*, Vol. III, London, 1931, p. 664. Present writer's emphases.

It can be seen that *sankhāra* and consciousness are missing from this definition. But if the matter were pressed, it could be allowed that *cetanā* and *sankhāra* were synonyms if reference is made back to *S. III.60. 24*) And in *S.II.94 viññāṇa* and *mana* are also synonyms:

Bhikkhus, that which is called thought (*citta*), mind (*mana*), consciousness (*viññāṇa*), the unlearned lay-man is not disgusted with, is not apathetic towards, is not freed from.

The word *manasikāra* is made up of the locative form of *mana*, plus a word which comes from the verb *karoti*, thus giving the literal translation of this compound word as “production (or “application”) of the mind”. This, plus the more usual translation “attention”, both point to a man’s faculty of discrimination, which is the prime characteristic of *viññāṇa*.

Briefly, then, *nāma* can be taken as referring to the process of ideation within the individual.

The meaning of *rūpa*, “form”, is obvious. It is the body of the individual which is formed in the womb, and on which basis the six senses are founded.

Salāyatana

The definition of this term may be given thus:

What, bhikkhus, are the six sense organs? (They are) the eye-organ, the ear-organ, the nose-organ, the tongue-organ, the body-organ (and) the mind-organ. (*S. II.3*).

And those things that correspond to these six inner (*ajjhātika*) sense organs, i.e., those things that occur outside of them, but are related to them (*bāhirāni āyatanāni*) are the “sphere of forms” (*rūpāyatana*), the “sphere of sounds” (*sada-*), “... tastes” (*rasa-*), “... smell” (*ghanda-*), “... tangibles” (*phoṭṭhabba-*) and “... mental images” (*dhamma-*).

To state the obvious, within the twelvefold P-s. the *salāyatana* depend on name-and-form. But it would seem, from a text found in the *Mahā-taṇhāsankhaya-sutta* of the *Majjhima*, that these do not become active properly until a later stage in the life of the individual, sometime after parturition. First the child is breast-fed, and this is followed by the stage of playing children’s games:

24) See above, p. 43.

Then, bhikkhus, when the boy is growing up, his faculties (*indriyāna*) develop, and being endowed with, and possessed of the five strands of sense-desire, he finds pleasure through the material forms which are pleasing, enjoyable, pleasant, enticing, endowed with pleasantness, apt to arouse excitement, and (which) are perceived through the eye. (And likewise for) sounds perceived through the ear, ... smells perceived through the nose ... tastes perceived by the tongue ... tangibles perceived through the body ...

He, having seen material object(s) with the eye, becomes attached to (those) enticing object(s) of sight among material object(s), and is troubled by (those) non-enticing object(s) ... He lives not concentrating upon his body, and with an inferior mind, thus he does not understand the mind's deliverance through wisdom as they really are, by which his wicked and evil states of mind cease without remainder. Thus, possessing satisfaction and dissatisfaction, he experiences any kind of feeling, pleasant, painful or (neither), and he finds pleasure in feeling, welcomes (it), becomes attached (to it). (This being so) delight arises, and that which is delight in feeling is grasping. (Therefore, he is lead on to becoming, birth and the rest.) (*M. I.266*).

And all this is said for the other sense organs, including mind.

The individual, therefore, does not create new *kamma* for himself until he reaches the stage when he can discriminate between what is pleasant and what is unpleasant, which is achieved through what is now the proper function of the six senses. This also, it should be added, necessarily entails the power of volition. Because he accepts all these at a rather shallow level, so to speak, the individual is thus led on to more rebirths, whose state depends on his previous actions, which are volitionally orientated towards the material world.

It is through his six senses, therefore, that the unlearned lay-man finds what he believes to be pleasure and delights, which he lusts for and craves after.²⁵⁾ Thus it can be seen that restraint with regard to these senses is of paramount importance.²⁶⁾

There are three things that can be said about each of the sense organs. The first is that happiness (*sukha*) and joy (*somanassa*), which sometimes arise because of them, lead to the enjoyment (*assādo*) of the particular sense organ concerned. This, therefore, gives the individual a false set of values, because the other point that can be made about them is that they are impermanent (*anicca*), of a changeful nature (*vipariṇāmadhamma*), and give distress or dis-ease (*dukkha*). This is known as the disadvantage or misery (*ādinava*) of the sense organs. If the individual does not properly understand the significance

25) See S. V.426 and A. II.10-12.

26) See M. I.180.

of this, he grieves for his loss. This is because of the desire and lust that have to do with the enjoyment he once knew. But by the destruction and removal of that desire and lust (*chandarāga*), he finds the escape (*nissaraṇa*) from each of the organs.²⁷⁾ However, this is not be taken literally, in the first instance at least. While the enlightened being still lives he cannot escape possessing these various organs. What is meant is that, unlike the unlearned lay-man, he is no longer susceptible to the reactions and sensations which will still arise while he is not in a state of trance or deep concentration. But, recognising each reaction and sensation for what they really are, he does not take the matter any further by wishing to enhance the state, nor to escape from it. Once it is gone, it remains a thing of the past, and no more thought is given to it.

Phassa

The more usual translation for this term is “contact”, thus giving it an almost exclusively physical aspect. But that this is not the case can be seen, for example, by referring back to a text already quoted: *S. II.3-4*.²⁸⁾ In this text it is seen to be a mental state, and the appropriate translation “reaction” has been given to it. This translation suggests itself from the definition of the term given in the following text:

What, bhikkhus, is *phassa*? There are, bhikkhus, these six groups of *phassa*: eye-reaction (*cakkhusamphassa*), ear-reaction, nose-reaction, tongue-reaction, body-reaction and mind-reaction. (*S. II.3*).

“Impression” could be allowed as a further translation of the term, but only where it can be taken in a sense virtually synonymous with “reaction”. This is not to say that contact is excluded as a part of the meaning of the term. It is obvious that this must happen for there to be a reaction. But this must be accepted as only a subordinate meaning of the word — at least within the context of the P-s.

The matter of the translation and interpretation of *phassa* can give rise to a problem. In the P-s. it is stated that from the cessation of the *saḷāyatana* there is the cessation of *phassa*; and from the cessation of the latter there is the cessation of *vedanā* — “feeling” or “sensation”. Now, if *phassa* meant physical contact, exclusively, it is obvious that this could not cease until after death. And, as soon as there was a new

²⁷⁾ See *S. IV.7*.

²⁸⁾ See above, p. 47.

rebirth, it would begin again. Therefore, the individual would be in a situation from which there could be no escape. Physical contact cannot be stopped in this life, but the impressions or reactions to a particular object can be, or at least they can be controlled so that kammic feelings do not follow.

To further substantiate this point a text in the *Nidāna Saṃyutta* may be referred to. Here Sāriputta is being questioned by other wanderers about the Buddha's teaching concerning the arising of *dukkha*. Some recluses and brahmins, they say, who are believers in *kamma* (*kamma-vādā*), regard *dukkha* as being made by oneself (*sayamkata*), by another (*paramkata*), by both, or by neither. The last group believes that it arises fortuitously (*adhiacca samuṭpanna*). Sāriputta answers:

It is said by the *Bhagavan*, friends, that *dukkha* is dependently arisen (*paṭicca-samuṭpannam*). Because of what (does it arise)? (It arises) because of reaction . . .

Thus, friends, those recluses and brahmins who believe in *kamma*, and who declare that *dukkha* is made by oneself, that (*dukkha*) depends on reaction. (And likewise for the other recluses and brahmins.) Thus, friends, those recluses . . . who declare that *dukkha* is made by oneself, it is not possible that they will experience (anything) without reaction. (And likewise for the others.) (S. II.33-34).

Here it can be seen that if the translation "contact" were used it would not properly bring out the meaning of *phassa* in this context; and, indeed, it would distort it. Using "reaction" it could be argued that it is the attitude of these recluses and brahmins to these several wrong views that is the reason for their living the life they do, which is diametrically opposite to the *Dhamma* of the Buddha. To say that *dukkha* is conditioned by mere contact with these views is manifestly incorrect, since Sāriputta is coming into contact with them by talking to these wanderers. No, it is because he has not *reacted* to these different doctrines in a favourable manner that he has no *dukkha*. And, on a more general view — see the first paragraph of the quotation — it is the reaction of mankind as a whole which, since those individuals are not trained in the *Dhamma* of the Buddha, leads to so-called pleasant and unpleasant feelings towards various stimuli.

Vedanā

Without argument or preamble, "feeling" or "sensation" may be used to translate this term. Of the two main definitions of *vedanā*, the first may be given as follows:

... There are, bhikkhus, these six groups of sensation: sensation which is born of eye-reaction (*cakkhusamphassajā*) ... ear-reaction ... nose-reaction ... tongue-reaction ... body-reaction ... mind-reaction ... (*S. II.3*).

The other definition divides the term into three parts:

Bhikkhus, there are these three sensations ... A happy sensation, a painful (*dukkha*) sensation, and a lethargic (*adukkhamasukha*) sensation. Bhikkhus, all happy sensations should be regarded as painful (*dukkhato*), painful sensations ... as impermanent (*aniccato*). When, bhikkhus, a happy sensation is seen by a bhikkhu to be painful (and also the other sensations), this bhikkhu is called a "properly seeing ariyan", he has cut off *tanhā*, destroyed the fetters, (and) by full and perfect understanding of pride, he has made an end of *dukkha*. (*Itv. p. 47*).

It is this definition which seems the most typical, and we shall remain with it for a while longer, particularly with reference to the so-called "lethargic sensations".

In the *Cūḷavedalla-sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* it is said of this sensation that it is "pleasant if it is understood, but painful if it is not understood", and further that "the bias of ignorance obsesses" it.²⁹) How is this to be explained? The answer would seem to be a simple one. The lethargic state of the unlearned lay-man — which is boredom — is unpleasant because it invariably comes about through a state of depression, and thus most, if not all things have no attraction for him. But it does not exist because of a certain understanding that things of this world have no ultimate value; rather it is conditioned, either directly or indirectly, by something else in this world which he regards as having an intrinsic value. An instance of this would be the man who is involuntarily separated from the woman he loves. While she is present the world is a beautiful place; but in her absence things lose their meaning. The state of boredom is also characterised by the feeling of neither wanting to do something, nor wanting to do nothing. This is always a painful dilemma. But, if such lethargic people only knew it, they are on the fringe of that which is experienced by the learned bhikkhu. The latter finds neither pleasure nor displeasure in anything in this world, because he sees things as they really are — by means of perfect knowledge — and, therefore, they are in no way desirable. Thus his attitude to them is completely neutral — as opposed to lethargic.

29) M. I.303.

Besides these two divisions of *vedanā*, there is another division which is twofold: mental (*cetasika*) sensation and bodily (*kāyika*) sensation. Of these two even an enlightened bhikkhu cannot rid himself of the latter, but he can control his reactions towards it.³⁰⁾ This bhikkhu has bias neither towards repugnance nor passion nor ignorance, since he knows, as they really are, all the various aspects of *vedanā*.

There is, however, another aspect of *vedanā* which may be briefly referred to. In the *Kūṭāgiri-sutta* of the *Majjhima* it is stated that certain happy, painful and lethargic sensations lead to the increase (*abhivaḍḍhanti*) of evil mental states (*akusalā dhammā*), and the diminishing (*parihāyanti*) of good mental states (*kusalā dhammā*). Therefore, the Buddha instructs the bhikkhus to give up (*paṇahatha*) these particular sensations. But, on the other hand, certain other sensations, whether happy, painful or neutral, increase good mental states, and diminish bad mental states. It follows, therefore, that the bhikkhus should dwell having entered into (*upasampajja*) these various sensations.³¹⁾

The obvious point to be made from the last paragraph is that sensations *as a whole* were not to be given up, but only those that caused a retrograde step on the road to enlightenment.

The main point now to be emphasised is the fact that only the first definition may be seen as being strictly relevant to the P-s. In this respect it can be understood what is meant by the statement: "from the cessation of reaction (there is) the cessation of sensation". What is being talked about here is the cessation of the six sensations resulting from the six reactions gained through the six senses. And what, more exactly, is meant in this case is that the bhikkhu, realising these sensations to be put the products of the mundane world, does not react to them in the way that the unlearned lay-man would; although, of course, except in a state of trance, he cannot but realise their existence.³²⁾

Tanhā

The problem in translating this word is not quite the same as in the case of *sankhāra*. With the latter it was a matter of trying to find an equivalent English term which incorporated several connotations. As

³⁰⁾ See S. IV.209.

³¹⁾ M. I.475-477.

³²⁾ See S. IV.209.

regards *taṇhā*, however, the problem is to find a term which has the correct intensity. No doubt this could be achieved by means of a phrase-translation; but, since this would prove cumbersome, it is considered better to use the common translation of "craving". However, it must be pointed out that this word carries more connotations in it in the following texts than it would ordinarily outside the bounds of Buddhist studies. No matter how far an individual goes in order to satiate this emotion he finds that he is attempting an impossible task.

With express reference to the P-s., *taṇhā* may be defined as follows:

... There are, bhikkhus, these six groups of craving: the craving for material forms, the craving for sounds ... for smells ... for tastes ... for tangible things ... for mental states. (*S. II.3*).

However, another common definition divides *taṇhā* into three: the craving for sensual pleasure (*kāmatāṇhā*), for becoming (*bhavataṇhā*) and for non-becoming (*vibhavataṇhā*).

In order to facilitate such an action as the destruction of craving, it is necessary for the true state of the world to be realised. This is achieved, for example, in section 103 of the *Saḍāyatana Saṃyutta*, by referring to the body in a derogatory manner. Here it is described as a boil (*gaṇḍa*), and craving is then termed the "root of the boil" (*gaṇḍamūla*). The bhikkhus are exhorted to "dig up" (*palikhatam*) this root. With such a description it is not difficult to imagine the success of the exhortation.

The idea of uprooting craving leads us to the comparison of this concept with a creeper (*māluva*), or some other plant.

For a man who lives carelessly,
Craving grows as a creeper;
He floats from existence to existence,
Wishing for fruit, like a monkey in the forest.
Him this contemptible craving,
(Which) clings to the world, conquers;
His griefs increase,
As the *bīraṇa* grass increases.
But he who this contemptible craving,
(Which is) difficult to overcome, defeats,
His griefs fall from him,
As a drop of water from the lotus.
This auspicious thing I say to you,
As many as are assembled here,
Dig up the root of craving,

As one who seeks the root of the bīraṇa grass.
 Let not Māra break you again and again,
 As the stream (breaks) a reed. (*Thag.*, vv. 399-402).

Another graphic synonym for *taṇhā* is that of the “seamstress” (*sīb-banī*). In the Book of the Sixes, section 62, some words of the Buddha are quoted, and the following interpretation is but one of several found in the section:

... impression is one extreme, friend, the arising of impression is the second extreme, the cessation of impression is the middle, and craving is the seamstress, for craving sews (the individual) to that very becoming through rebirth. (*A. III.399-400*).

Thus, two seemingly unrelated entities, a creeper and a seamstress, are brought together through the medium of analogy. Brought together in this way, they show the fundamental power of craving. This is its ability to bind. Beings are bound to *saṃsāra* because they virtually honour craving. Doing this, they are like a “captured hare” (*saso va bādhitō*) “attached to (craving’s) bonds and fetters” (*saṃyojanasangasattakā*).³³⁾ To use another analogy, it is said that the man who has craving for a “companion” (*dutiyo*, lit. “second”) will for a long time be fettered to rebirth and becoming. But he who sees this “danger” (*ādinava*), and knows that craving is responsible for the arising of *dukkha*, he is freed from this evil, and goes about as a Wanderer (*paribbājaka*).³⁴⁾

The root of craving is ignorance.³⁵⁾ Therefore, the obvious corollary to this is that through knowledge craving ceases.³⁶⁾ Thus, being expert in the seven parts of wisdom (*satta bojjhanga*)³⁷⁾ and the four applications of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhānā*),³⁸⁾ the ideal bhikkhu who has seen things as they really are gives up the wish to be reborn in a more materially wealthy state. And while he is in this world he does not wish to possess those things that belong to the more wealthy members of society. He remains content in the life he has chosen, studying the *Dhamma*, and having all attributes, such as calmness,

33) Dhp., v. 342.

34) See A. II.10.

35) Thag., v. 573.

36) See Ud., p. 80.

37) S. V.86.

38) S. V.300.

concentration and the rest, which are essential for the proper carrying out of this study.

The two prime banes of mankind, ignorance and craving, must be destroyed if the individual is to begin his arduous task of attaining enlightenment. Through ignorance men crave for all manner of things; and the man who craves is so intent upon the fulfilment of his various ambitions that he has no awareness of the possibility that he is, in fact, deluded in his attitude towards the world. Strangely enough, there are times in some people's lives when even old-age may be desired, because of some reward or virtue that it is supposed to bring.³⁹⁾ And death, also, can be a desired state for some, but not for any good reason from the Buddhist point of view. If we accept, therefore, the basic premise that there is such a phenomenon as rebirth, then it is rightly said that "craving produces the man".⁴⁰⁾

Of a bhikkhu who has been successful in his quest, it is more correct to say that he has destroyed craving and its bond, rather than to say that he arises in this or that place.⁴¹⁾ No basis can be found in him on which a new rebirth could be built.⁴²⁾ In short, "The destruction of craving is *nibbāna*".⁴³⁾

Upādāna

Again, as was the case with *taṇhā*, a translation can be given of this word, but the qualification must be added that the English word must connote more in this Buddhist context than elsewhere in English literature. Translations used are "grasping", "attachment" and "clinging", of which the first may be considered the best since it has a more dynamic connotation; and it has the added advantage of denoting both the act of taking the particular object and also of keeping it.

The *upādāna* which is found in the P-s. is defined as follows:

... Bhikkhus, there are these four graspings: the grasping of sense-desires... of views... of good works and rites... of the theory of the self... (*S. II.3*).

39) Cf. "Grow old along with me!

The best is yet to be."

From the poem 'Rabbi Ben Ezra' by Robert Browning.

40) S. I.37.

41) S. IV.399.

42) S. IV.391.

43) S. III.190.

As to the meaning of these four compounds, these are found in the *Dhammasaṅgani*. The grasping of sense-desires can be left as being virtually self-explanatory. Of the grasping of views, it is said:

There are no alms, no sacrifices, no oblation, there is no result nor fruit of good or evil deeds, there is not this world, nor another, there is no mother, there is no father, there are no beings spontaneously reborn, there are no perfect recluses and brahmins in this world who have right views, who declare, having experienced it for themselves, knowledge concerning this world and the next... (*Dhs.*, p. 212).

But if a comparison is made here with a text found in the *Visuddhimagga*, a momentary doubt may arise as to why this criticism should exist:

Mere suffering exists, no sufferer is found;
The deeds are, but no doer of the deed is there;
Nirvāṇa is, but not the man who enters it;
The path is, but no traveller on it is seen.⁴⁴⁾

Are not both quotations stating the same fundamental view? The answer must be that this is certainly not the case. The first quotation is a criticism of the Nihilist theory, which held a totally pessimistic view of the world. Such people were condemning the giving of alms and oblations, etc., but were not offering anything substantial to take their place. In their minds there was nothing for which a sacrifice should be made, and we are merely the sum of our parts. On the other hand, the Buddhist doctrine is neither pessimistic nor nihilistic; and the 'surface' meaning, so to speak, of the second quotation is not its real meaning. Furthermore, the major difference between the Nihilists and the Buddhists was that the latter offered a very definite goal to be attained, whereas the former would have said that even to seek for a way to change one's destiny was a deluded venture.

The grasping of good works and rites entailed the belief that a shallow observance of morality was enough to obtain a better rebirth. For their part, the Buddhists would say that all actions begin with the mind, and thus, if the right thought is not there, the deed holds little if any merit:

Mind foreruns (all evil) conditions, mind is chief, mind-made are they; if one speaks or acts with wicked mind, because of that, pain pursues him, even as the wheel follows the hoof of the draught-ox.

44) Quoted in Nyanatiloka's *Buddhist Dictionary*, Colombo, 1956, p. 12 (s.v. *anattā*).

Mind foreruns (all good) conditions, mind is chief, mind-made are they; if one speaks or acts with pure mind, because of that, happiness follows him, even as the shadow that never leaves.⁴⁵⁾

The grasping of the theory of the self was the view that any one of the five *khandhas* was the self. The argument against this would be that each of these is impermanent, whereas the self or soul was, by definition, permanent, and not subject to decay and suffering.

In the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* of the *Majjhima*, the Buddha tells Vacchagotta that any view concerning the world — whether it is eternal or not eternal, etc. — the identity or non-identity of the soul (*jīva*) and the body (*sarīra*), and the state of the *Tathāgata* after death,

does not lead to aversion, to passionlessness, to cessation, to tranquility, to higher wisdom, to enlightenment, to *nibbāna*. Considering this disadvantage, Vaccha, I have not resorted to these views at all... Therefore, the *Tathāgata*, for the destruction, dispassion, cessation, abandoning, renunciation and non-grasping (*anupādā*) of all (such) illusions, all disturbances of the mind (through passion), all predispositions of the mind to egotism and self-interest, is released, I say. (*M. I.486*).

And all this is equally true for the four *upādānas*. The grasping after these various things is the fuel for a man's continual becoming and rebirth, as the wood is the fuel for the fire. If the fire is not supplied with any more fuel it will go out (*nibbuta*, lit. "become cooled");⁴⁶⁾ and in the same way, a man who does not grasp will stop his rebirths, though he may continue in the world for a while, until the effects of all his previous *kamma* have run their course.

In keeping with some of the other terms in the P-s., *upādāna* can also be found closely connected with the six senses:

What, sir, is the reason, what is the condition by which some beings do not attain *nibbāna* here in this world? What is the reason... by which some beings do attain *nibbāna* here...? There are, lord of the devas, pleasant, enjoyable, agreeable, enticing, desirable and delightful material forms perceived by the eye. If a bhikkhu finds delight (in them), welcomes (them), is attached (to them), for him thus delighting... on account of that consciousness there is grasping. And a bhikkhu who is full of grasping (*saupādāna*) does not attain *nibbāna*. (*S. IV.101-102*).

45) Dhṛp., vv. 1-2. Trans. by Narada Thera: *The Dhammapada*, London, 1959, p. 15.

46) M. I.487.

It follows naturally that a bhikkhu who is “without grasping” (*an-upādāna*) will attain *nibbāna*. And what has been said concerning the eye applies equally to the other five sense organs.

Another way in which grasping is said to arise is found in the *Sutta Nipāta*:

He who is not attached is not confused,
 He who is attached, grasps;
 Becoming here and becoming elsewhere
 He does not overcome the round of rebirths.
 Knowing this danger:
 Great fear is in attachments;
 Not being attached, he is without grasping,
 The mindful bhikkhu (thus becomes) a Wanderer. (*Sn.*, p. 142).

This is the message that is continually echoed throughout the whole Canon. To trust or be attached to — they come to the same thing in Buddhist thought — anything in this world is to begin on a completely false basis. The ideal bhikkhu, on the other hand, because he has no opinions on many mundane matters, grasps at nothing in this world. Because of this fact he is not worried by anything.⁴⁷⁾ It is a matter of complete indifference to him whether he is honoured or not, since his concern or delight (*ārāma*) lies only in the knowledge that grasping is destroyed.⁴⁸⁾ He knows that there is nothing in the world to which he can cling without being sinful (*vajjavā*). For by such grasping, becoming is the inevitable result.⁴⁹⁾

Bhava

The translation “rebirth” for this word may be regarded as being, if not incorrect, at least unfortunate with reference to the P-s. Its predominant connotation is that of “becoming”, but “existence”, although not chosen in this work, can be looked on as a possible translation. However, there is the point that the latter does seem to bear the added implication of durability, which the Buddha was always at pains to avoid. “Rebirth” is indeed connoted in this term, but it will be put to one side, because to use it would be to have two virtually synonymous terms following one another, i.e., *bhava* and *jāti*. The main point to

47) See S. IV.23.

48) See Itv., pp. 74-75.

49) See S. III.93-94.

stress is that all things are in a state of continual change, and this is best brought out by the word "becoming".

This "becoming" can be regarded on two planes. On the one hand, there is that becoming which is evident to an enlightened person *within* the present life of the individual. This is a reference to the changes which are found not only in thought, but in the body and all other things. On the other hand, there is the becoming of the individual as "he" becomes in one life after the other. This, of course, makes it virtually equivalent to rebirth; but the difference between the two is that rebirth is contained within becoming, and it leads to one of the three general states: sensuous-becoming, corporeal-becoming and incorporeal-becoming. The first of these refers to becoming in the world of sense-desires (*kāmaloka*), which includes the various hells, animals, spirits (*peta*) and the human realm, plus the six lower deva-realms. Corporeal-becoming includes the states resultant of the four *jhānas*. Therefore, although the sense organs still exist, the various evils resulting from them are reduced. Finally, the incorporeal-world includes the four spheres (*āyatana*) above the four *jhānas*: "the sphere of the infinity of space" (*ākāsānañcāyatana*), "the sphere of the infinity of consciousness" (*viññāṇaṇañcāyatana*), "the sphere of nothingness" (*ākīñcaṇñāyatana*), and "the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception" (*nevasaññānāsaññāyatana*).

It must be remembered that becoming in all these worlds is dependent on *upādāna*. Therefore, even the last sphere is not equal, by any means, to the cessation of rebirth.⁵⁰⁾

So long as the individual is totally concerned with his own physical and mental existence, he is continually led on to becoming. Not only this, but his enjoyment, desire and craving for becoming — because he has not seen things as they really are, the arising, destruction, enjoyment and danger of becoming — keep him yoked to this "bond of becoming" (*bhavayoga*).⁵¹⁾

Those who have brought about the cessation of (renewed-)becoming, either through possessing "shame-and-fear" (*hiriottappa*),⁵²⁾ or through the giving up of the "seven bonds" (*sattasanga*),⁵³⁾ or by

50) See M. I.42.

51) A. II.10.

52) Itv., pp. 36-37.

53) Itv., pp. 93-94.

developing the “seven factors of enlightenment” (*sattabojjhangā*), ⁵⁴) they arrive at either of the two *nibbāna*-elements:

These two *nibbāna*-elements are made known
 By such an one who possesses knowledge,
 And is not attached.
 One element belongs to this world here,
 With substratum remaining,
 (But) with the destruction of the leading to becoming,
 (That) without a substratum belongs to the future
 In which becomings cease absolutely.
 Those who know this uncompound constituent (*padam*)
 Are released in mind,
 With the destruction of the leading to becoming.
 They, having attained the essence of the *Dhamma*,
 (And) delighting in destruction,
 Have given up all becomings. (*Itv.*, pp. 38-39).

Jāti; Jarāmarāṇa-Soka-paridevaduḥkhaḍomanassupāyāsa

The last two units may be dealt with in one section since neither has any real difficulties with regard to translation or interpretation.

The dependence of old-age-and-death on birth is at least one part of the P-s. which Western thought would have no difficulty in understanding. It is obvious to all that birth necessarily entails a subsequent death; though even this truism has to be emphasised to some lay-people in the Buddhist text. One calls to mind the story of Kisagotami who went to the Buddha with her dead child, and asked him if he would restore life to it. The Buddha told the woman to bring him a mustard seed from a house that had not known death, and this she sought to do. Her failure in this matter then brought home to her the fact that death is the lot of all mankind, and once it has come there is no escape from it. However, the *constant* existence of any of the other members of the following compound is not so obvious to those who think that they can find happiness in sense-pleasures, material gains and family relationships. This is brought out well in a text found in the *Udāna*. Here a woman, Visākhā by name, is in mourning for her recently dead granddaughter. Nevertheless, when asked she expresses the desire to have many children and grand-children. This said, it is then pointed out to her that, since among such a number there would be at least one death every day, she would be in mourning forever. The conclusion from this

54) Thig., p. 128.

is that even if only one thing is held as dear in the world, there would still be *dukkha*. But for those who hold nothing as dear (*piya*), there is no *dukkha*. 55)

Of all the terms that are the concern of this section, only the definition of *jāti*, "birth", need be given; and then only to emphasise a point previously made with regard to *bhava*:

And what, bhikkhus, is birth? It is the birth of any beings among any class of beings, (their) origin, appearance, rebirth, the manifestation of the (five) aggregates, the attainment of the sense-organs. (*S. II.3*).

Birth, therefore, is the period from conception until parturition, and thus it may be seen that it is something within the concept of *bhava*. Whereas many years may separate two occurrences of the former, the latter is constantly occurring.

It was — and still is, of course — the intention of the Buddhists to show the stark reality of the material world. Everything in it is suffering (*dukkha*), impermanent (*anica*) and not-self (*anattā*), even though it may *seem* to have the nature of bliss. The possessing of a body brings about innumerable griefs, pains and afflictions. The Buddha always emphasised the obvious, but he did it in such a manner that the preconceived notions prevalent in his time were cast aside as being of no value for the gaining of enlightenment. In order to facilitate this task, either he or later tradition materialised, and even at times personified, the various evils that beset mankind. For example,

By death is the world *afflicted*,
By old-age is it *escorted*,
By the *arrow* of craving it is *pierced*,
By wishes is it always *fumigated*.

The essence of this teaching is neither to crave for, nor to grasp after anything or anyone. There is no Justice in the world which smiles benevolently upon parent and child, man and wife, and allows the one to live for the sake of the other's happiness. There is only the automatic law of *kamma*, which brings to *all* the results of their past deeds. Neither the father can save the son, nor the wise-man the fool from the "power of death" (*maccurvasam*). Mourning the dead brings only greater grief for oneself. Therefore, one must see the dead as forever lost, and to understand from this that grief over a loved one's decease

55) See Ud., p. 92.

serves no ultimate purpose. However, the very content of the last sentence means that this is asking the impossible. A loved one is, almost by definition, someone whose death would leave an intrinsic gap in one's life. Hence it is necessary to go further back than this, and to love no one, to trust in no one, depend on no one. This done, old-age and death, whether one's own or another's, are of no moment. And the very fact that one has attained this attitude of mind means that one has seen the world as it really is, and has drawn out the arrow of craving. ⁵⁶⁾

⁵⁶⁾ See, for example, Sn., vv. 574-593.

MUHAMMAD'S JOURNEY TO HEAVEN *

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The earliest connected account of the ascension of Muḥammad is found in the famous biography of Muḥammad written by Ibn-Ishāq, who lived from A.D. 702 to 768: he was thus active about a century after the death of Muḥammad which took place in A.D. 632. I begin from Ibn-Ishāq's work rather than from those brief passages in the *Qurʾān*¹⁾ which have traditionally been taken as referring to Muḥammad's ascension because the meaning of those enigmatic verses is much disputed by scholars and the detailed discussion, which would be necessary if one were to try and make use of them, would take us too far from the particular concerns of this paper. Ibn-Ishāq's narrative is a weaving together of a number of traditions stemming from various intimates of Muḥammad, such as his wife 'A'isha. As a result, there sometimes occur different versions of the same episode which diverge more or less significantly from one another. More importantly, Ibn-Ishāq's story is a combination of two quite distinct events, one, Muḥammad's journey in a single night from Mecca to Jerusalem which, in the strict sense, is not an ascension at all, and the other, Muḥammad's visit to the heavens. We shall have to consider the relationship between these two events in due course.

According to the story,²⁾ Muḥammad was sleeping one night near the Kaʿba, the sacred building in the centre of the sanctuary at Mecca, when he was woken by the angel Gabriel, who led him to the gate of the sacred enclosure. There he found an animal, described as being "white, half mule, half donkey, with wings on its sides with which it

*) A paper originally read to the Exeter Folklore Colloquium, 1971.

1) For some discussion of these passages, cf. the articles on *isrāʾ* and *miʾrāj* in the *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1953.

2) For a translation of this, cf. A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muḥammad*, 1955, pp. 181-7. The quotations of Ibn-Ishāq in the text are from this translation, unless otherwise stated.

propelled its feet, putting down each forefoot at the limit of its sight." This creature is also described as being the beast on which the prophets prior to Muḥammad used to ride and has the name Burāk. Muḥammad mounted him and was carried on his back to the temple at Jerusalem, accompanied by Gabriel, "who went with him to see the wonders between heaven and earth." Arrived at the Jerusalem temple, Muḥammad found Abraham, Moses, Jesus and a company of prophets, whom he led in prayer. Then he was brought two, or in another tradition, three, vessels, containing respectively wine and milk, or wine, milk and water. He drank the vessel containing milk, upon which Gabriel said to him, "Muḥammad, you have been rightly guided to the *fiṭra*", a somewhat obscure word, but which may be understood as meaning 'the true primaeval religion.' ³⁾

Here the events in Jerusalem terminate, and Ibn-Ishāq simply states that Muḥammad returned to Mecca before going on to describe his reception when he came back. But after this description, Ibn-Ishāq returns to the setting of Jerusalem and quotes Muḥammad as saying, "after the completion of my business in Jerusalem a ladder was brought to me finer than any I have ever seen. It is to this the dying man looks when carried to the place." ⁴⁾ Muḥammad climbed this ladder, accompanied by Gabriel, until he reached the gate of heaven. The gate-keeper was an angel called Ismāʿīl, who asked Gabriel who Muḥammad was and then enquired, "has he received a mission?", receiving an affirmative answer from Gabriel. As Muḥammad journeyed up through the various levels of heaven, until he reached the seventh and final one, the same dialogue took place on each occasion. To return to the first heaven, there Muḥammad is quoted as saying that he saw Adam judging the spirits of the departed and, in this same first heaven, he was also shown hell by the angel Mālik, the keeper of hell — "he removed its covering and the flames blazed high into the air until I thought they would consume everything." In each of the heavenly spheres he visited, Muḥammad saw another great figure from the past, just as he had seen Adam in the first—Jesus and John the Baptist in the second, Joseph in the third, Enoch in the fourth, Aaron in the fifth, Moses in the sixth, and Abraham, sitting on a throne at the entrance to paradise,

3) The suggestion of Guillaume, *op. cit.* p. 182, n. 2.

4) The translation of the last five words is that of Geo Widengren, *Muḥammad, the Apostle of God, and his Ascension*, 1955, p. 102.

in the seventh. Ibn-Ishāq reproduces two traditions about what happened to Muḥammad after he had reached the seventh heaven. According to the first, Abraham took him into paradise and, in what are given as Muḥammad's own words, "I saw a damsel with dark red lips and I asked her to whom she belonged, for she pleased me much when I saw her, and she told me 'Zayd, son of Hāritha.'" The traditionist who reports this episode then adds, "Muḥammad gave Zayd the good news about her." The Zayd mentioned here was one of Muḥammad's closest associates, a former slave whom he adopted as his son. By Muḥammad's desire, he married a lady twice his age, and according to Moslem tradition, Muḥammad promised him paradise for marrying her: we see that this included a doubtless welcome substitute for his wife. According to the second tradition, Muḥammad was admitted into the presence of God himself, from whom he received the command, henceforward to be the distinguishing mark of the pious Moslem, to recite fifty prayers every day. After this, Muḥammad returned to earth, although we are given no details of his return journey.

Ibn-Ishāq's narrative is to some extent fragmentary and summary, and later Moslem authorities, while not departing from the basic outline, provide us with a number of other details, some of which are of interest for our particular purpose.⁵⁾ With reference to the night journey, Gabriel and Muḥammad are said to meet several good and several wicked powers on their way to Jerusalem, while, according to another tradition, the place of punishment of the damned is located between heaven and earth and Muḥammad sees it in the course of this same journey. With reference to the ascension proper, the following details may be noted. First, the great religious figures of the past in the heavens are not just seen by Muḥammad, which is all that Ibn-Ishāq states, but he is introduced to each of them and each of them greets him, generally with the words, "Welcome, good brother and good prophet." Secondly apparently at the border between the seventh heaven and paradise, Muḥammad is shown a tree, with a specific name, *Sidrat al-muntahā*, commonly translated, perhaps somewhat despairingly, as 'the lotus-tree at the boundary.' All we are told about it is its great size

5) These are largely to be found in al-Ghāṭi's 'Story of the Night Journey and the Ascension', translated in A. Jeffery, *A Reader on Islam*, 1962, pp. 621-39. Although Ghāṭi died only in A.D. 1574, his work rests on traditions which took shape as early as the beginning of the tenth century A.D., cf. R. Hartmann, 'Die Himmelsreise Muhammeds', *Bibliothek Warburg, Vorträge* 1928-9, p. 55.

—“its fruits were like water-pots and its leaves like elephant's ears.” Thirdly, in the same region, Muḥammad is shown a building or, according to a variant tradition, recites the fifty prayers already mentioned in this building, which again has a specific name, *al-bait al ma'mūr*. Literally, this means ‘the inhabited house’ or ‘frequented house’, perhaps to be explained by what is said about it in a rather late narrative of Muḥammad's ascension,⁶⁾ “every day seventy thousand angels visit it and the next day they go away, and the occasion will never come back to them again.” However this may be, this heavenly house has a particular importance from our point of view and we shall return to consider it later.

Such, then, in very broad outline, is the story of Muḥammad's ascension. The impression it is likely to make on us at first sight is well expressed in some words of A. A. Bevan: “in general it may be said of the traditions concerning the Prophet's Ascension that, while they contain much that is grotesque, they are wholly devoid of poetical feeling and of the impressiveness which we should expect to find in descriptions of the other world.”⁷⁾ The difficulty is that the significance of the episodes we have outlined is nowhere explained and thus it is easy to dismiss them as the product of pious fantasy, elaborating and distorting the brief and tantalizing glimpses of his spiritual experiences which Muḥammad has left us in the *Qurʾān*. Such has been the general conclusion of Islamic scholars, who have mainly devoted themselves to analyzing the development of the traditions about Muḥammad's ascension, to pointing out their inconsistencies and to isolating additions made in the course of time to the original kernel of the story. A good example of this is the statement by Fazlur Rahman in his book on ‘Islam’, published in 1966, where he writes: “the *Qurʾān* refers to an important transforming experience or perhaps a series of such experiences of Muḥammad in several *Sūras* . . . But the spiritual experiences of the Prophet were later woven by tradition, especially when an ‘orthodoxy’ began to take shape, into the doctrine of a single, physical, locomotive experience of the ‘Ascension’ of Muḥammad to Heaven, and still later were supplied all the graphic details about the

6) Translated in Widengren, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-6. The passage quoted is on p. 224.

7) Cf. his ‘Mohammed's Ascension to Heaven’, *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, vol. xxvii, 1914, p. 60.

animal which was ridden by the Prophet during his ascension, about his sojourn in each of the seven heavens, and his parleys with the Prophets of bygone ages from Adam to Jesus . . . The doctrine of a locomotive 'Ascension' developed by the orthodox (chiefly on the pattern of the Ascension of Jesus) and backed by *Hadith* is no more than a historical fiction whose materials come from various sources." 8) But even if this view were wholly correct, it does not at all explain the motives which led later Moslems to embark on the creation of all this fantasy, still less the particular *kind* of fantasy which they evolved. Nor are the suggestions that they did all this as the result of Christian influence, or, alternatively, the influence of later Judaism, very convincing. No doubt, as has often been pointed out, various details in certain later accounts of Muḥammad's ascension have very probably been borrowed from one or other of these sources. 9) But they remain *details*: they are essentially additions to an already well established pattern and not the basic constituents of that pattern itself. When we compare the narratives of the ascension of Muḥammad with the gospel accounts of the ascension of Jesus it is difficult to find a single point of identity, while the whole structure and significance of the two events are totally different: to give just one, but a vital, instance, the ascension of Jesus is the prelude to a permanent sojourn in heaven, while Muḥammad's visit is only temporary, and when Muḥammad died and ʿUmar, one of his friends, claimed that he was not really dead but had gone to Allah and would return after forty days, he was silenced by another of Muḥammad's friends, Abū Bakr, who recited the verses: "Muḥammad is nothing but an apostle. Apostles have passed away before him. Can it be that if he were to die or be killed you would turn back on your heels?" 10)

What we need is a view of the story of Muḥammad's ascension which will explain what it is in fact all about, which can account for it *as a whole* and which can show how the various elements in it belong together. A few scholars, in the earlier part of this century, noted how certain features of the narrative have parallels in other religious

8) *Op. cit.* p. 14.

9) Cf. e.g. B. Schrieke, 'Die Himmelsreise Muhammads,' *Der Islam* vol. vi, 1916, p. 16f.; J. Horowitz, 'Muhammads Himmelfahrt', *Der Islam*, vol. ix, 1919, p. 173f.

10) Cf. Guillaume, *op. cit.*, p. 693.

systems, covering a wide area of space and time. Yet, illuminating as these observations are and, although, as I shall hope to show, they point in the right direction, they still only amount to little more than suggestive remarks about certain isolated features and the scholars in question have not grasped the full significance of what they observed, precisely because they did not go on to integrate these particular elements into the pattern of the story as a whole. The only thorough-going attempt, as far as I am aware, that has been made to interpret the ascension of Muḥammad from the standpoint of the history of religious has been that of the Swedish scholar, Geo Widengren, in two studies published in 1950 and 1955 ¹¹). It is impossible to discuss Widengren's extremely important investigations here, but briefly he sees the whole scenario of Muḥammad's ascension as determined by the ritual pattern of sovereignty in the Ancient Near East and by the idea of the king's ascension which was a central feature of his coronation. "This same pattern was maintained in the exemplary images and the mythical biographies ... of the Prophet." ¹²) While it is true that this pattern may have had a good deal of influence on later developments in the description of Muḥammad's ascension and certainly on the ideology of the later Shiite imams, who are very much royal figures, yet it does not seem very prominent in the earlier accounts. In fact, Widengren's studies say very little about the greater part of the narrative material dealing with Muḥammad's ascension, and they concentrate almost exclusively on his interview in heaven with Allah, about which the earliest accounts by contrast say very little. In short, even Widengren's very thorough investigation does not give us the real meaning of the account of Muḥammad's ascension *in its totality*, which we have argued is the real desideratum.

It appears necessary, then, to look elsewhere in the field of comparative religion, ethnography and the history of religions for a clue to the real meaning of Muḥammad's ascension and it seems possible that this may be provided by the religious phenomenon known as shamanism, which has recently been the object of a good deal of scholarly interest. Here I do not want to be misunderstood. I am not

11) *The Ascension of the Apostle and the Heavenly Book*, 1950; *Muḥammad the Apostle of God, and his Ascension*, 1955.

12) The comment of M. Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*, E. tr. 1960, p. 99.

suggesting that there is any direct connection between Muḥammad and his religious experiences and any of the shamans, pre-eminently a phenomenon of Siberia and Central Asia, who have been described by anthropologists and travellers. But as Eliade has demonstrated, shamanism is basically a technique of ecstasy and it has a particular and distinctive religious structure of its own and what may be suggested is that a very closely similar ecstatic technique and structure of religious experience are to be seen in Muḥammad, and particularly in the account of his ascension. I would agree entirely with Eliade when he says that "despite all the typological similarities, it is impossible to assimilate the ecstatic ascension of Mohammed to the ascension of an Altaic or Buryat shaman. The content, the meaning of the spiritual orientation of the prophet's ecstatic experience presuppose certain mutations in religious values and make it irreducible to the general type of ascension."¹³) But I would also agree with him when he writes elsewhere that "one need only refer to the *mirāj* of Mohammed to convince oneself that, in the history of religions, as everywhere else, to compare is to confuse. It would be absurd to minimise the differences of content that diversify examples of 'flight', 'ecstasy' and 'ascension.' But it would be just as absurd not to recognize the correspondence of structure which emerges from such comparisons. And, in the history of religions, as in other mental disciplines, it is knowledge of structure which makes it possible to understand meanings. It is only after we have clarified, as a whole, the structure of the symbolism of the flight that we can arrive at its first meaning; the way is then open for us to understand each case separately."¹⁴) All I want do, then, is to try and demonstrate the 'correspondence of structure' between the ascension of Muḥammad and similar phenomena among the shamans.

Further, there is some evidence to suggest that this general structure of shamanic experience may have been mediated to Muḥammad through the seers or soothsayers of the pagan Arabs, the *kāhins*, for these "have their origin in the shamans, medicine men and fetish priests."¹⁵) In particular, there are a few passages in the Ḳurʿān which suggest that the possibility of an ascent to heaven was known to Muḥammad's

13) Cf. M. Eliade, *Shamanism*, E. Tr. 1964, p. 377.

14) Cf. M. Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*, pp. 109-10.

15) Cf. A. Fischer, *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 206. For the wide diffusion of shamanism, cf. N. K. Chadwick, *Poetry and Prophecy*, 1942, p. 90f.

contemporaries ¹⁶⁾ and it is recounted of the pre-Islamic poet Zuhair that "he saw in a dream someone who came and lifted him so high in the sky that he could touch it with his hand, and then let him fall again to the earth". ¹⁷⁾ Again, there is an account of an experience of dismemberment, which, as will be seen in the next paragraph, is a regular prelude to ascension, suffered by a man living at the time of the emergence of Islam. ¹⁸⁾ Although Muḥammad disclaimed being a *kāhin*, "his earliest appearance as a prophet reminds us strongly of the manner of these soothsayers" ¹⁹⁾ and he may well have originally been quite closely connected with them. The difficulty is that our evidence provides very little detail about the religious experiences of the *kāhins* ²⁰⁾ and virtually nothing that helps us to elucidate the various elements in the accounts of Muḥammad's ascension. In view of the considerations just adduced, however, it may not be illegitimate to use the much fuller evidence we have of shamanism elsewhere to fill out Muḥammad's Arabic background and to help explain the details of his own ascension.

Where we have to begin is from the fact that an experience of an ascent to the sky is an essential part of the *initiation* of a shaman. ²¹⁾ It is the way in which the neophyte himself becomes aware, and also demonstrates to others, that he has been called to this particular vocation and the way in which he acquires the magical knowledge, the secrets of the shamanic craft, which he needs for his task. Ibn-Ishāq appears to suggest that Muḥammad's ascension took place at a comparatively late stage of the prophet's life, but this is because he has linked it with the story of the night journey to Jerusalem which contains indications that it occurred when Muḥammad had already had time to collect a considerable group of disciples around him: and scholars are now generally agreed that the account of the ascension originally referred to the very beginnings of the prophet's mission. ²²⁾ That this is so is made clear by at least two features of the story. First,

16) Cf. Sūra lii, 38 and Sūra vi, 35.

17) Quoted in T. Fahd, *La Divination Arabe*, 1966, p. 256.

18) Cf. Horowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 171f.

19) Fischer, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

20) Cf. for a thorough account of the evidence, Fahd, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-104.

21) Cf. M. Eliade, *Shamanism*, Index, s.v. 'ascension'.

22) This was first clearly shown by A. A. Bevan, 'Mohammed's Ascension', p. 58.

there is the question which, as we saw, was asked about Muḥammad at his entrance to each of the seven heavens, 'has he received a mission?' The denizens of heaven do not yet know that Muḥammad has been called to his prophetic vocation: it is only when they are sure of his calling that there can be revealed to him the secrets of the other world and this itself is an essential part of the whole initiatory process. Secondly, there is a curious episode, which Ibn-Ishāq does not report in this particular place although he has it elsewhere, but which, in most other accounts, immediately precedes Muḥammad's ascension. It begins from the same point, with Muḥammad asleep in the Ka'ba. But then three angels—or in other versions Gabriel alone—came to him, and, as Muḥammad was sleeping, "they laid him on his back, opened his body, brought water from the Zamzam well (that is, the sacred well at Mecca) and washed away all that they found within his body of doubt, idolatry, paganism and error. They then brought a golden vessel which was filled with wisdom and belief and then his body was filled with wisdom and belief. Thereupon he was taken up to the lowest heaven." Here clearly the language of the narrative has been influenced by the theological dogmas of the developed faith of Islam. As mentioned, Ibn-Ishāq does not have the story at this particular point, but he reproduces it in his account of Muḥammad's childhood in what seems to be a more original and less overtly theological form. According to this, Muḥammad said: "While I was with a comrade of mine behind our tents shepherding the lambs, two men in white raiment came to me with a gold basin full of snow. Then they seized me and opened up my belly, extracted my heart and split it; then they extracted a black drop from it and threw it away; then they washed my heart and my belly with that snow until they had thoroughly cleaned them."²³) This episode has generally perplexed Islamic scholars and they have attempted to account for it by some rational explanation: thus, in his Pelican volume on Islam, Professor A. Guillaume commented: "Exactly what lies behind this story of the opening and cleansing of Muḥammad's belly it is hard to see, unless it is an attempt to give a literal meaning to the metaphorical statement in the Quran, 'Did we not open thy breast for thee?'"²⁴) But this rather lame explanation is seen to be both unnecessary and erroneous when we realize that the dis-

²³) Cf. Guillaume, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

²⁴) Cf. A. Guillaume, *Islam*, 1961, p. 25.

memberment of the body, followed by a cleaning and renewal of the viscera and internal organs, is one of the commonest initiatory themes in the making of a shaman, attested among a very wide range of peoples.²⁵) It is of course a symbol of the fact that the individual in becoming a shaman becomes a new man, and in the shamanic rituals it accompanies the theme of the new shaman's ascension. Thus its identical relationship with Muḥammad's ascension makes it clear that his heavenly journey was in fact his initiation into his prophetic calling.

How does the journey to heaven effect initiation? In the shamanic rituals, when the shaman ascends to the sky, he has a dialogue with the gods or the spirits and he also holds conversations with the spirits and souls of dead shamans. From the former he receives religious revelation, from the latter more specifically shamanic revelations which constitute, so to speak, the secrets of the profession taught to him by those whose ranks he is now joining. Both these features are plain in the account of Muḥammad's ascension. We have seen that its climax is a dialogue between the prophet and Allah—and this is much expanded in narratives of the ascension other than that of Ibn-Ishāq—in which there is revealed to him the duty of reciting the fifty prayers, the distinctive mark of the followers of the Muslim faith and the means by which they will obtain blessedness in the hereafter. Similarly, Muḥammad, the new prophet, converses with the former prophets, who welcome him as a prophet like themselves and as their brother: we may also note how on the thematically closely linked night journey to Jerusalem, the animal on which Muḥammad rode was the one on which the prophets prior to him had ridden and that at Jerusalem he joined in a common religious ceremony with these same prophets. It is easy, and of course correct, to point out that the predecessors Muḥammad meets are all Biblical figures and that they originate in Muḥammad's consciousness from his knowledge of the Jewish and Christian scriptures. But the matter is perhaps not quite so simple as that. One of the ideas behind the shaman's ascension is that he thereby restores the paradisaical state, the condition of things at the very beginning of time when there was that unhindered communication between this world and the other world which has now, for one reason or another been lost, and can only be achieved by such an exceptionally privileged

25) Cf. M. Eliade, *Shamanism*, Index, s.v. 'dismemberment'.

person as the shaman.²⁶) Now in the accounts of Muḥammad's ascension a very special place is occupied by the figure of Abraham. He is in the highest of the heavens, he initiates Muḥammad into the ultimate mystery of paradise and, according to Ibn-Ishāq, Muḥammad when he saw him said, "Never have I seen a man more like myself": he was the figure from the past with whom Muḥammad felt himself most closely identified. How may we account for this very special position of Abraham? In the *Qurʾān*, Abraham is described in a particular, almost technical, way, as one who was neither a Jew nor a Christian nor a polytheist, but was a *ḥanif*. The meaning of this term *ḥanif*, which has been much discussed, seems to be given by Sūra xxx, 30 in the *Qurʾān*, which runs as follows: "Turn thy face towards religion as *ḥanif*, (namely) to the original concept according to which Allah has created man. There is no change in the work of Allah. This is the immutable religion, but most men do not know it." It is clear here that the word *ḥanif* means "the original, innate, primitive religion in contrast to the particular religions which arose later, polytheism on the one hand and the at least partly corrupt religion of the possessors of the scriptures."²⁷) Thus Abraham is the only perfect embodiment of man in his relationship to the divine as God intended man to be when he created him and it may be claimed that his central role in Muḥammad's ascension confirms our understanding of that ascension as a restoration of the primal human state. In this connection, we may refer back to the episode of the presentation to Muḥammad of the three vessels each containing a different liquid in the story of the night journey to Jerusalem: it should be noted that this episode more generally appears in the narratives of the ascension to heaven where it probably more properly belongs. It will be recalled that when Muḥammad chose the milk, Gabriel told him that he had been rightly guided to the 'true primitive religion,' his action restored the proper state of man at the creation. Thus, though the particular form of it is determined by the Bible, the ideas which lie behind the account of Muḥammad's converse with his predecessors of old may not be so dissimilar to the shaman's meetings with his predecessors as might appear at first sight.

²⁶) Cf. M. Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*, p. 65f.

²⁷) Cf. F. Buhl in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 132. Cf. also the similar conclusion of W. Montgomery Watt in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. III, new edition, 1971, p. 165.

Once we have grasped the general character of the ascension of Muḥammad, we can easily see how many of the apparently 'grotesque'—to use Bevan's word—details of the narrative fit into the initiatory pattern as we see it in shamanism and find their significance from this connection. Thus Muḥammad climbs to the sky by means of a ladder, and indeed the Arabic word used to describe his ascension is *mīrādj*, literally 'ladder'. A real, or symbolic, climbing of a ladder is a very common means by which the shaman reaches heaven on the journey which initiates him into his calling.²⁸) However, we also saw in Ibn-Ishāq's account that this ladder is the means of communication with the other world for the departed as well—"it is to this ladder that the dying man looks when carried to this place." In the shamanic initiation, the new shaman as well as visiting heaven also visits the underworld: there is nothing exactly corresponding to this in the stories about Muḥammad and this at first may seem an important divergence from the common shamanic structure. But the divergence is more apparent than real: what is different is the topography of the after-life in the two cases, not the purpose and significance of the journey. In the religious scheme of shamanism, the sky is reserved for the gods and spirits, while the underworld is the realm of the departed. In the thought world of Muḥammad, the realm of the departed seems to be the lowest heaven, where they are judged by Adam, the wicked being then consigned to hell, which is located between the lowest heaven and earth, and the good, presumably, being rewarded with the paradise above the highest heaven. But the purpose of the shaman's visit to the underworld is that he may know the secrets of the after-life, and that, as a result, he may be able to instruct men about it and so guide and help them when their time comes to go there. So Muḥammad has revealed to him the whole state of the departed, he visits both heaven and hell, he can—as indeed he did—tell men what these are like and how they should conduct themselves so as to realise a happy fate in the next world. Thus, in the lowest heaven, he sees adulterers, usurers and oppressors of widows and orphans being cast into the flames of hell: ²⁹) on the other hand, he is able to reveal to his friend Zayd the secrets of paradise and the delights that await him there.

²⁸) Cf. M. Eliade, *Shamanism*, Index, s.v. 'ladder'.

²⁹) Cf. A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, p. 185f.

In the course of his ascension, Muḥammad passes through seven heavens and the notion of heaven as divided into seven levels which the shaman visits on the course of his initiatory journey is again a very common one.³⁰⁾ In Muḥammad's journeys, whether to Jerusalem or to the sky, he is always accompanied and guided by the angel Gabriel, and this feature recalls the spirit guide who regularly, in many different cultures, leads the future shaman in his journeys to the other world. Gabriel himself, of course, is a product of Muḥammad's increasing familiarity with Jewish and Christian teaching about angels and there is some evidence to suggest that, at the beginning of his career, to which, as we have argued, his ascension belongs, he may have had a much less precise idea and believed that revelation came to him through a spirit, rather like the spirit or *djinn* who inspired the Arabic soothsayers with whom, as we have also seen, he was probably well acquainted.³¹⁾ The two remaining elements in the story of Muḥammad's ascension which need to be considered are the tree and the house in the seventh heaven. With regard to the tree, we must surely see it as a form of the world-tree or the cosmic tree. This is one of the commonest cosmological conceptions in the religions of mankind, but the point of interest for us is that it plays a very prominent part precisely in the kind of initiatory experiences we are considering: the shaman finds it at the end of a very long journey and he is often said to climb it to reach the ultimate heavens. Thus it is on the border, and forms a link, between one state of existence and another and this is how one should perhaps interpret the mysterious phrase in the narratives of Muḥammad, 'the lotus tree at the boundary.' The world tree is associated in a large number of archaic traditions with two other ideas both of which find their echoes in the texts we are considering. One is the idea of fertility and thus the world tree is commonly encircled by symbols which express this concept, such as fruits and water. We have already seen how the miraculous fruitfulness of the 'lotus tree at the boundary' is stressed in most of the accounts of Muḥammad's ascension but the same accounts also speak of four great rivers which spring from its roots. No doubt the actual description of these is determined in its present form by the picture of the Garden of Eden and its four rivers in the book of Genesis, but both rest on much older

30) Cf. M. Eliade, *Shamanism*, Index, s.v. 'heaven'.

31) Cf. A. Fischer, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

conceptions. The second idea associated with the world tree is that, in Eliade's phrase, it is "the very reservoir of life,"³²⁾ and this is vividly symbolized by references which speak of the shaman on his initiatory journey seeing either the souls of children waiting to be born or men of various nations perching like birds among the branches. There is nothing precisely corresponding to this in the narratives of Muḥammad's ascension but there may be a reminiscence of the original concept in a late *miṣrāj* account which represents the prophet as saying, "and I passed from that place and arrived at the lotus tree on the boundary and there like ants I saw angels without number."³³⁾

Turning now to the house which is in the same area as the tree, as we saw, it possibly owes its name, the *bait al-ma'mur*, to the fact that it was visited daily by a large number of angels, and we are told in some traditions that the purpose of this visit was for worship. So the angels are depicted as the ministrants in the heavenly sanctuary. Now according to Muslim tradition the *bait al-ma'mur* in the seventh heaven was situated immediately over the temple at Mecca.³⁴⁾ This, of course, is a version of the idea of the exact correspondence between the earthly and the heavenly sanctuary which is found in many religions. But we can go a little further than this. Ibn-Ishāq, as we saw, makes Muḥammad begin his ascension from Jerusalem and this is the dominant Moslem tradition, but several other accounts make the ascension start from the sanctuary at Mecca. That is, there is a direct connection between the earthly house and the heavenly one and it is from the former that one can break through to the latter, and this is so because the earthly house or temple is thought of as the microcosm of the universe, so that one can project oneself from there on to the cosmic plane. These are precisely the ideas which provide the rationale for the shaman's initiatory ascension, which generally begins from a particular house, and for the imitative rituals which effect it. In Muslim thought, the sanctuary at Mecca was believed to form the place of communication with the upper and the under world and it seems clear that it is this idea which accounts for the presence of the corresponding heavenly sanctuary, the 'frequented house', in the narrative of Muḥammad's ascension.

32) Cf. *Shamanism*, p. 271.

33) Cf. Geo Widengren, *Muhammad, the Apostle of God*, p. 225.

34) Cf. A. J. Wensinck, *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 197.

Here there are a number of rich complexes of interlocking religious concepts which could and should be pursued a good deal further in the light of Moslem tradition and its links with the traditions of other religious systems. But this would go far beyond the limited scope of the present investigation. In conclusion, it is necessary to discuss a little further the distinct tradition, as we take it to be, of Muḥammad's night journey to Jerusalem. Certainly this has become confused in the course of tradition with the ascension proper, and features belonging to one event have been transferred to the other and *vice versa*. Thus, the ascent to the sky, which properly belongs to Mecca, starts from Jerusalem, and the animal, which is properly the mount on which Muḥammad rides to Jerusalem, becomes the means by which he is transported from Mecca to the sky. Nor is this surprising or without good reason. The notion of the sanctuary as the microcosm, and therefore the appropriate place for the journey to heaven to begin, is as characteristic of Jerusalem as it is of Mecca, while, as we shall see, the idea that the shaman rides up to the sky on the back of some animal is an extremely common one. But it would seem that the night journey to Jerusalem has its own distinctive character and can properly be considered by itself. It is essentially a flight through the air by which the participants are enabled to see the "wonders between heaven and earth" or the place of punishment of the damned in the same area. Now in shamanism, one of the most important powers the shaman acquires is the ability to fly, and that not merely vertically to the sky, but also horizontally to distant parts of the earth.³⁵⁾ Though not identical, this kind of flight is thematically very similar to the ascent to heaven, because it exemplifies the shaman's magical power over time and space which he acquires from his contact with the spirits who have the same power. In fact, in accounts of shamanic initiations, the shaman often makes several journeys to various parts of the universe, before finally ascending to the sky, as part of a single pattern, as in the remarkable story of a Samoyed shaman recounted to A. A. Popov:³⁶⁾ we can thus understand how the night journey and the ascension of Muḥammad have come to be combined in the narrative of Ibn-Ishāq. Very commonly the shaman is thought to use an animal as the means of locomotion in his flight, often a bird for obvious

35) Cf. M. Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*, pp. 99-110.

36) Reproduced in M. Eliade, *Shamanism*, p. 38f.

reasons, but various winged fourfooted animals also appear. The beast on which Muḥammad rode to Jerusalem—or, as we have, in some traditions, to heaven—is surely a product of the same world of thought, although Islamic scholars are still trying to explain it away as a mere product of ill-controlled fantasy. Thus, in the latest edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, R. Paret, commenting on Ibn-Ishāq's statement that the animal had wings on its sides, says, "these words are intended to mean, of course, only that the beast could move its legs extremely quickly, and not that it was capable of flying."³⁷) Notice that 'of course'! Ibn-Ishāq's words seem simply to mean what they say and, once we realize the background of ideas to which the animal belongs, it is far more likely that it would have been expected to fly than that it would not. Further it may be noted that the animal's name, Burāk, is difficult to explain from Arabic, it is probably a word that goes back long before Muḥammad and, "in general much reported about the steed will derive from pre-Islamic tradition."³⁸)

We may end this study with one or two supporting considerations, not directly connected with Muḥammad's ascension, which may suggest that the circumstances of his call to be a prophet were not entirely unprecedented and that they did have the sort of pattern and structure which are illustrated in shamanic initiatory processes. On the one hand, the fact has already been referred to that there are a number of passages in the *Qurʾān* which indicate that Muḥammad's contemporaries expected of a holy man the kind of mystical experiences with which this paper has been concerned. For example, in *Sūra xvii*, 90-93, Muḥammad's opponents say to him: "We will certainly not believe in thee until there is for thee a garden with palm-trees and grapes and thou cause rivers to gush forth abundantly in its midst"—i.e. until you can re-create paradise—"or until thou mount up to heaven." Or again in *Sura vi*, 35, Allah tells Muḥammad that he would be able to overcome the opposition of his opponents, "if thou couldst find a way down into the earth or a ladder into the sky to bring them a portent." Of course, the scholars have been busy with this too: the great French Arabist, Régis Blachère in his translation of the *Qurʾān*, interprets the words 'if thou couldst find a way down into the earth,' as "to procure

37) Cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. I, new edition, 1960, p. 1310

38) Cf. Paret, *op. cit.*

a treasure for yourself.”³⁹⁾ Surely a more obvious explanation is suggested by our earlier discussion. On the other hand, there are a number of widely described circumstances surrounding the call of Muḥammad, all of which are closely parallel to those we know to form part of the initiatory experience of the shaman. Thus, he sometimes suffered great pain at the hands of his spirit visitants, as when, on the occasion that Moslem tradition views as that on which he actually received his call, Gabriel came to him, “seized him and squeezed him vehemently three times until exhaustion overcame him.” At this time, to quote one tradition, “solitude became dear to him”: to quote another, “he started going early to the tops of mountains to throw himself down from them”: he became subject to visions and trances and was seized by nameless dread and terror.⁴⁰⁾ All these features can be closely paralleled in the experience of shamans from a wide area, but the important thing is that they constitute one part of the regular, expected initiation of the shaman: in Eliade’s words, “more or less pathological sickness, dreams and ecstasies are so many means of reaching the condition of shaman.”⁴¹⁾ Again, one of the marks of the shaman is his possession of ‘magical heat’ within himself,⁴²⁾ and this is more than once attested of Muḥammad, as in the testimony of his wife ‘Ā’isha: “I have actually seen him, at the coming down of the revelation upon him, on an extremely cold day, with his forehead running with perspiration.”⁴³⁾ One could go on much further, but it may be claimed that the material examined in this paper at least raises the possibility that Muḥammad’s journey to the other world is not just a late invention of pious fancy but is rather an essential part of his prophetic call, and that it and the otherwise strange details it contains can best be understood as a reflection of the general scheme of shamanic initiation, however much that may have been transformed by Muḥammad’s own unique religious experience and his own individual genius.

39) Cf. R. Blachère, *Le Coran*, 1957, p. 155 n. 35.

40) These various traditions are translated, from the account of az-Zuhri, in W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 1953, pp. 40-1. Cf. also pp. 49-50.

41) *Shamanism*, p. 33.

42) Cf. M. Eliade, *Shamanism*, Index, s.v. ‘heat’.

43) Cf. Watt, *op. cit.*, p. 55f.

RULES GOVERNING THE ŠAYḤ-MURŠID'S CONDUCT

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Introduction by Annemarie Schimmel

Sufism has often been regarded, by Western authors, as a religious movement which transgresses the borders of Islamic legalism, thus constituting a way towards greater individual freedom, and which may even end up in a complete negligence of law and order. The exuberant poetical utterances of many Persian, Turkish, and Urdu poets were taken at face value and understood to depict a state of constant intoxication which was, then, considered to be the very meaning and end of Sufism.

Contrary to this widespread view it cannot be stressed enough that Sufism in its classical form consists primarily of the deepening of the religious injunctions as laid down in the Qurʾān and the tradition of the Prophet Muḥammad. The early Sufis as well as the leaders of the mystical orders which emerged from the mid-eleventh century in the Islamic world were always conscious of the paramount importance of the *šariʿa*, the Islamic law. The meditation of the Qurʾān was a basic part of their guidance and instruction. Besides, the Sufis developed a remarkable psychological insight in their training the souls of men. The first to lay down in writing rules of psychological control, which not the slightest movement of the *nafs*, e.g. the 'lower soul', the 'base faculties' could escape, was the Iraqi mystic al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī (d. 859). His method of rigorous introspection was taken over by many of the later writers on Sufi practices, and the 'training of the *nafs*' constitutes the most important part of Sufi education.^{a)} By 'little sleep, little eating, little talk' (to which often was added the

a) The best introduction is: Joseph van Ess, *Die Gedankenwelt des Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī, anhand von Uebersetzungen aus seinen Schriften dargestellt und erläutert*. Bonn, 1961.

forty days' seclusion, *ḥalwa*) the novice learned to govern his lower instincts, and was slowly guided to higher regions of religious experience, so that he might traverse the different states (*ḥāl*, pl. *aḥwāl*) and stations (*maqām*) on the Path (*ṭarīq*) and perhaps be blessed, finally, with annihilation (*fanāʾ*) and the even higher rank of *baqāʾ*, the eternal life in God and through God.

The Swiss scholar, Fritz Meier, has shown that Sufism was, and is, based on initiation^b); an alleged Prophetic tradition claims that 'He who has no spiritual master (*ṣayḥ*), his master is Satan', for proper guidance on the difficult path is absolutely necessary for the wayfarer (*sālik*). That is why the relations of the master with the disciple (*murīd*) were strictly regulated from the very beginning of organized mystical life. The disciple's behavior toward all classes of people and under all conditions, in sleeping and wakefulness, in eating, fasting, or travelling was likewise strictly prescribed lest he fall a prey to Satanic insinuations. Small wonder that the first complete handbook of *adab*, etiquette, was composed by the founder of the first order proper, Abū Najīb al-Suhrawardī (d. 1168). Earlier authors had touched upon these problems in special sections of their books.

Since the disciple was bound to complete surrender and perfect obedience, a preformed harmony had to exist between master and disciple; we therefore often read that mystics traversed many countries until they found a master whom they could trust without any reluctance, just as the master would accept only those who seemed close to his heart, or 'whose names he had read on the Well Preserved Tablet as belonging to his disciples'. Notwithstanding the almost absolute power of the spiritual guide (*muršid*) over his followers, one should not forget that his goal was not to kill the disciple's *nafs* but rather to train it: the base faculties are like a restive horse or a donkey which can work excellently and carry the soul towards its goal once it has felt the hand of the master-rider.^c) The alleged word of the Prophet: *aslama ṣayṭānī* "My Satan (e.g. my lower qualities and instincts) has

b) Fritz Meier, *Vom Wesen der islamischen Mystik*, Basel 1943; cf. also his edition of Naǧmuddīn Kubrā's main work with an important introduction: *Die fawāʾiḥ al-ǧamāl wa fawāʾiḥ al-ǧalāl des Naǧmuddīn al-Kubrā, herausgegeben und eingeleitet von Fritz Meier*, Wiesbaden 1956 (indispensable for the psychology of Sufism).

c) Cf. A. Schimmel, „Nur ein störrisches Pferd...". *Festschrift für Geo Widengren*, Leiden 1972.

become a Muslim, i.e. has submitted itself to me, and now it does whatever I order it of good things" expresses perfectly the goal of the Sufi master: whatever 'raw material' of qualities the disciple possesses, all of them, without exception, have to be transformed into the 'gold' of perfect mystical love by the spiritual alchemy as worked by the master.

One of the most important duties of the master in this process is to introduce the *murīd* to the right use of the formulae of recollection; for the human soul needs a special type of recollection on every station. It depends upon the master to find out, either by spiritual insight (*firāsa*) or by discussing the disciples dreams and visions, which formula or which Divine Name may be used by him in his present state; for the wrong formula of recollection (which has to be repeated thousands of times until it completely permeates man's soul and body) can lead to grave psychic deformations or to mental shocks.^{d)}

There were many more duties of the master, beginning with the careful selection of his followers: the act of sniffing (*šamm*) which is mentioned in the following article, belongs to the most interesting methods to choose a disciple. It is well-known that some people are able to discern illnesses by mere sniffing at a person's body — so why not discover illnesses of the soul by this method? The frequent use of metaphors connected with 'smelling' in the works of Persian Sufi poets — particularly Rūmī — points to the great importance given to the sense of smelling as well: was not Jacob cured by sniffing at Joseph's shirt, according to Islamic tradition?

The etiquette of the disciples *vis-à-vis* their master has been discussed several times during recent years, thus by Fritz Meier in his article "*Ein Knigge für Sufis*"^{e)} and by the author of the following essay. To understand the strictly lawbound, very well defined attitude of the leading masters of Sufism in the methods of practical training, it is highly relevant to have an account of the master's duties towards his disciples; it is, besides, a good lesson for psychologists and educationalists, even if they are not working in the mystical Path.

d) A good introduction is Ibn ʿAṭā Allāh al-Iskandarānī, *miṭṭāḥ al-falāḥ wa miṣbāḥ al-arwāḥ*, Cairo 1961; cf. also Fritz Meier, "Quṣayrīs Tartīb as-sulūk", *Oriens* XVI, 1963.

e) In *Scritti in onore di Giuseppe Furlani*, Rome 1957, and id. „Hurasān und das Ende der klassischen Sufik", *La Persia nel Medioevo*, Rome 1971 about the different types of *ṣayḥs*.

Rules Governing the Šayḥ-Muršid's Conduct

"Truly I am an instructor of insight and wit in this
our time" — Ḥarrāz.

An incursion into the category of *adab* (correct behaviour) governing *šayḥ-murīd* relationships tends at first glance to impress the reader with a picture of the *šayḥ* almost totally dominating the *murīd* and of the latter being completely at his mercy. The principal source references on Sufism have contributed to this impression by accentuating the position of the *šayḥ* and degrading that of the *murīd*.¹⁾ For a movement that berated status, it seems inconceivable that those who elevated the role of the *šayḥ* to such lofty heights²⁾ would ignore *adab* governing his relationships with the *murīd*. Depicting him as God's and the Prophet's spiritual vicegerent seems to justify his immunity in their eyes to regulatory procedures. Already the *šayḥ* is deemed superior to the *ʿālim* (scholar) in both his knowledge of the faith and in his extraordinary gift for spiritual perception, which *ipso facto* renders him indispensable to the *murīd*.³⁾

1) See my "Etiquette Governing the *Murīd's* Relations with his *Šayḥ-muršid*" in *Festschrift Pareja*, II (Leiden: Brill, 1973).

2) In "*Risālat qawānīn al-īṣrāq ilā kull al-Šūfiya li-jamāʿ al-āfāq*" of Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Tunisi al-Wafāʿi al-Šadhili (Cambridge, Or. 1008, fol. 38a), the *šayḥ* is "he who teaches thee by his *qāl* (speech) and elevates thee by his *ḥāl* (mystical state), who benefits the seeker (*al-ṭālīb*) and opens up searches (*maṭālīb*); he is perfect in both his *dhāt* (essence) and *ṣifāt* (qualities); who, if his protecting arm (*ḥimā*) is desired, there is no need for another besides him; who benefits thee in *šahāda* (the visible) and *ḡayb* (the invisible) and purifies thine *sirr* (secret) with his own; who if his aid is desired he is there before it is asked, who protects the *murīd* with his *kalāla* (fatigue) and relieves thee of anxiety with his care, and who is the *sirr* of God disguised in human form out of concern for the very special of His elect."

3) States Quṣayrī (*Rishīla*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd and M. b. al-Šarīf, Cairo: Dar al-Taʿlīf, 1966, 732-34): "never in history has a *ʿālim* not humbled himself before a Sufi *šayḥ* as concerns knowledge of *uṣūl*." Suhrawardī asserts that even among the Sufis themselves spiritual leadership is the domain of but a few who possess extraordinary powers of discernment and insight. These are rare men "who appear now and then and who may or may not have left written testimony to their spiritual superiority and unique qualities: Junayd (d. 910), Abū Ḥafṣ al-Nisābūrī (ca 880 or 883), Abū ʿAlī al-Daqqāq (d. 1015 or 1021) before, and ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Gilānī (d. 1166), Abū ʿI-Ḥasan al-Šadhili (d. 1258), Abū ʿI-Alāʾ al-Mursī (d. 1287), and Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh al-Sakandarī (also al-Iskandarānī) (d. 1309) after the introduction of the orders to the world of the Sufis.

The concept of *murīd-ṣayḥ* relationship was current though not yet formalized in the third/tenth century, a century or so before al-Ġazālī (d. 1111) accentuated the need for dependence with attending rules and observances.⁴⁾ Abū Yazīd (d. 261/875) had stated earlier that "he who has no master is the disciple of the devil," and Abū ʿAlī al-Daqqāq told al-Quṣayrī (d. 1072), his disciple, "a tree that grows from unplanted seed bears no fruit."⁵⁾ Others like Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī (d. 1178) maintain he cannot even be regarded as a *murīd* until the *irāda* (will, intention) of the *ṣayḥ* is locked into him (*lā yakūnu murīdan illa idha thabatat irādat al-ṣayḥi fihī*).⁶⁾

Though there is reference to the *adab* incumbent on the *murīd vis-à-vis* his *ṣayḥ* in such key works as *al-Lumaʿ*⁷⁾ of Sarrāj (d. 988) and *al-Risāla*⁸⁾ of al-Quṣayrī, these and others like Hujwiri's (d. ca. 1071) *Kaṣf al-maḥjūb* ignore the category of *adab*⁹⁾ pertaining to the *ṣayḥ's* relationship with the *murīd*. Ḥarrāz (d. ca. 890) refers to *adab* only by allusion,¹⁰⁾ Muḥāsibī (d. 859) makes almost no mention of it,¹¹⁾ and Junayd (d. 910) only tangentially and philosophically,¹²⁾ while

4) Dhū 'l-Nūn (d. 859) was the *muršid* of Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896), who is credited with articulating the earliest principle of *ṣayḥ-murīd* relationships, and who in turn was Ḥallāj's (d. 309/922) *ṣayḥ*. Abū ʿAlī al-Daqqāq was Quṣayrī's (d. 465/1072) who imparted to him much of the information upon which he built his notions of *adab* governing these ties.

5) Quoted in the *Risāla*, 731; see also ʿAwārif al-maʿārif, of ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Suhrawardī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1966), 70.

6) From a Berlin miscellany, 3177. We. 1743 [W. Ahlwardt, *Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, IX, 3. Berlin: Asher & Co. 1891] fol. 49bs.

7) Less than two pages out of seventy (141-211) of his "*Kitāb ādāb al-mutaṣawwifa*" relate to "*ādāb al-murīdīn wa 'l-mubtadiʿīn*" (205-207) but none to "*adab al-ṣayḥ*".

8) In it we have a cursory yet systematic treatment of the *murīd's adab* only ("*bāb al-waṣīya lil-murīd*," 731-52).

9) In chapter entitled "*adab al-ṣuḥba*" (334-66) the stress is on the *sunna*-inspired concepts of *adab*; no mention is made of the *ṣayḥ's* etiquette towards the *murīd*.

10) In a chapter on "*al-ṣidq fī 'l-ḥayā*" (73-83 Arabic text of his *Kitāb al-ṣidq*.)

11) Less than a page, addressed only to the *murīd* ("what the *murīd* himself must do inwardly and outwardly"). *Riʿāya*, 133.

12) The closest he comes to the subject of *adab* is in his *Risāla* entitled "*adab al-muftaqir ila 'l-Lāh*" (58-62) of *Rasā'il al-Junayd*. Hujwiri (in his *Kaṣf*, 338) refers to a work on *adab* by Junayd called "*Taṣḥīḥ al-irāda*" but which apparently is unavailable (Cited in *GAL*, SI. 3. 18/2, 355 [Brill, 1936] on Hujwiri's authority and in Sezgin's *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums* I, 21 (# 18, 647).

Makkī (d. 996) deals with the subject haphazardly.¹³) In his *Jawāmiʿ ādāb al-Ṣūfiya*,¹⁴) al-Sulamī (d. 421/1021) has little to say about *adab al-ṣayḥ maʿa murīdihī*, other than to state he is to have pity on the *murīd* and be sociable with the brethren, on the authority of the prophetic saying: point to the young the path of wisdom and correctness.¹⁵)

It is only with the orders that we notice in the tracts of some specific allusion to *adab al-ṣayḥ*. A few authors make mention thereof in their title or chapter headings.¹⁶) The inevitable conclusion that without *murīds* there can technically be no *ṣayḥ-muršids* in itself is indicative of interdependence. Indeed, frequent rebukes addressed to *ṣayḥs* soliciting actively *murīds* suggest the prestige of the *ṣayḥ* rested in no small measure on a following of *murīds*. The eagerness of the *murīd*

13) See 30-32, 131-48 and 168-70 of his *Qūt al-Qulūb*, I (Cairo: ʿIsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1381/1961).

14) An interlinear edition was issued in Leiden in 1892 (see P. Voorhoeve, *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Leiden* . . ., Leiden, 1957).

15) "*Jawāmiʿ ādāb al-Ṣūfiya*," fol. 182 (Leiden, ms. Or. 1842).

16) For example, "*al-ʿIqd al-naḍīd fī ādāb al-ṣayḥ wa 'l-murīd*" of Muḥammad Efendi al-Ṣayyādī al-Rifāʿī ([Istanbul], 1307 H.), executed in the form of an *urjūza* (14-15); "*Risāla fī ādāb al-mašyāḥa wa 'l-murīdīn*" (part of a collection in the India Office Library London, Ar. ms. 1038) for which no author is listed but most presumably represents the Naqšabandī version; a chapter entitled "*bayān ʿalāmāt al-muršīdīn*" in *Zimām al-sālikīn fī ādāb al-ṭarīqa* of Muḥammad b. Nūr al-Maymūnī (Bombay, 1378/1958, p. 9), a Qādiriya exposé; a section, in *urjūza* style, of "*Muṭaḥharat al-nufūs wa rawḍ al-qulūb*" by Ḥasan Raḍwān (Cairo: Dīwān ʿUmūm al-Awqāf al-Miṣriyah, 1322 H, pp. 304-07); a chapter, "*fī ādāb al-ṣayḥ wa mā yaʿtamīduhu maʿ al-aṣḥāb wa 'l-talāmīdha*" in *ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif*, 414-21; "*Kitāb al-rusūḥ fī maqām al-ṣuyūḥ*" of ʿAbd al-Ġanīy b. al-Nābulī (Berlin. We. 1631); also from a miscellany (Berlin, Spr. 896), "*Kitāb tuḥfat al-ḥillāb wa munḥat al-Waḥḥāb fī 'l-ādāb bayn al-ṣayḥ wa 'l-aṣḥāb*," fols. 41a seq.; also "*Kitāb maqṣad al-ḥillāb fī mā yalzam al-ṣayḥ wa 'l-murīd min al-ādāb*" of M. b. Zayn al-ʿAbidīn b. M. al-Ġumrīy (Berlin, Spr. 897); "*Risāla fī šurūṭ al-ṣayḥ wa 'l-tilmīdh* . . ." of ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī al-Simillāwī (Berlin, Lbg. 107), and a chapter on "*šarāyīṭ al-mašyāḥa*" in *Tāj al-Dīn* b. Zakariyā al-ʿUthmānī's "*Ādāb al-murīdīn*" (Berlin, Pm. 243). There are several tracts on the subject in a miscellany cited by Ahlwardt (III, M. 3206), also chapter X of Section 9 of "*Kitāb miršād al-ʿibād*" by Najm al-Dīn al-Rāzī (Ottoman Turkish translation by Qāsim b. Maḥmūd Qara-Ḥiṣārī. Uppsala University Library, 483 Zettersteéns *Katalog*) entitled "*fī maqāmat al-ṣayḥīya wa šarāyīṭha wa šifātīha*" (fols. 94-101), occurring also in a Persian version (*dar bayān-i maqām-i ṣayḥ wa šarāyīṭ-i ān*) in Yūsūf ibn Ṣayḥ Muḥammad Najm al-Dīn Gardizī's "*Iršād al-sālikīn*" (Cambridge, King's No. 1, fols. 79-84) which titles have been used for the present study but by no means are deemed comprehensive or exclusive.

in turn to obtain *al-ḥirqa* (the patched frock) as evidence of his having been accepted, played an equally important role in his search for a *ṣayḥ* to train him, which too was a practice frowned upon by the orthodox observer.¹⁷⁾ Al-Sulamī maintains it was legitimate for the *ṣayḥ* to preach to commoners (*ʿawām*) if it led to the discovery of *murīds* who might conform with his goals.¹⁸⁾ However in accepting to train him, it is for God and not for himself that he does so.¹⁹⁾ Suhrawardī (d. 1234), on the other hand, insisted the *ṣayḥ* must not actively seek *murīds* because "God will send them to him, perhaps to test his truthfulness and piousness."²⁰⁾ Moreover, an unsolicited *murīd* is less prone to *iʿtirād* (resistance), is easier to train, and is more likely to succeed in his endeavors.²¹⁾

Foremost among the qualifications of the *ṣayḥ* aspiring to *iršād* (spiritual guidance) is truthfulness²²⁾ and visible qualities consonant with the highest ethical standards. He must not even occupy the position of *iršād* and training except with God's permission, declares ʿAlī b. Maymūn al-Mağribī.²³⁾ The stress is on piety, as evinced in the *Qurʾānic dicta* "we have rendered for the pious a leader", "the pious are leaders of the people", and "the kindest in the sight of God are the most pious."²⁴⁾ Moreover, their claim to superiority over *al-ʿulamāʾ* (ulema) rests on the notion they constitute the elect of God,

17) In justifying the *ḥirqa*, al-Šaʿrānī (ʿAbd al-Wahhāb) (d. 1556), dubious author of "*al-Nafahāt al-quḍsiya fi bayān qawāʿid al-Šūfiyah*" (Velieddin, 1835 Istanbul, fol. 12a) argues that the idea underlying wearing it is analogous to a traveler who for each type of journey dons a suitable attire, "so we put it (*ḥirqa*) on the *murīd* in order that the *ḥāl* of the *ṭarīqa* he chooses can permeate him."

18) His preaching, however, was to be restricted only to that information which would lead to the winning over of a candidate. "*Jawāmiʿ ādāb al-Šūfiya*," fol. 228.

19) From a ms. titled "*Ḥulāṣat al-arbaʿ aʿimma*" but wherein the colophone reads "*Lāmiyat al-ajam*" (to be cited henceforth as such) and the card index describes it as a "Manual of Aḥmadiya" (Bodleian. Ms. Bruce 12), fol. 67b (chapter entitled "*ma yajib ʿala al-ṣayḥ taʿdīb al-murīd*").

20) *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif*, 415.

21) "*Lāmiyat al-ajam*", fol. 67b.

22) When Bahlūl "the mad" (early 9th century) was asked how could one discern truthfulness in the *ṣayḥ* he replied: by the *ṣayḥ's* ability to close the door of comfort and open that of abjection, close that of ease (*rāḥa*) and open the door of striving (*juhd*), close the door of wealth and open that of poverty, and lastly, close the door of sleep and open that of wakefulness. Bodleian, Ms. Arab. e. 189, fol. 106a.

23) From an untitled ms. (Berlin, 3180. Pm. 108), fol. 100.

24) *Qurʾān*, 49/13.

on the authority of the verse "We have chosen one of Our servants and caused Our mercy to reach him and taught him much of Our knowledge (*'allamnāhu min ladunnā 'ilmān*')," 25) This is reinforced by the prophetic saying "there still can be found a segment of my people abiding with truth (*qā'imīna 'alā al-ḥaqq*) who cannot be harmed by those who forsake them." Mercy was a quality the elect of the elect was required to display to commoners as well as *murīds*, to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. 26) In short, the commonly held view was that the *ṣayḥ* should observe fine *adab* in every circumstance, first and foremost of which was the emulation of the Prophet at the highest level of perfection in respect to every detail of conduct, habit and act of worship. 27)

Nearness to God obligated the *ṣayḥ* seeking to be an *imām* (leader in worship and in general) of men to render upright his intent and to purify his heart from every malice, hate, envy and presumption. For, after all, it is their leaders who insist that the *ṭālib* (seeker) must seek only the perfect *ṣayḥ* to receive training from him, a *ṣayḥ* who is free of all impediments and distractions, receptive to his Lord's beckoning, identifies with His morality, who alone can point the way for attaining *wuṣūl* (the ultimate goal). 28) Moreover, by the divine insight, inspiration and introspective knowledge thus acquired, the *ṣayḥ* can perceive immediately "what needs be done to ready the *murīd* for *wuṣūl* and cause his own *ḥāl* (spiritual state) to flow into him," argues al-Šādhilī. 29)

He who seeks to be a *murīd* (who practices spiritual guidance) is expected to master that amount of *'ilm* 30) (knowledge, particularly in the field of religious duties) which is deemed necessary for meeting

25) *Qurʾān* 18/64.

26) An extreme position cited in "*Mirṣād al-ʿibād*," fol. 966.

27) A Naqṣabandī position, so stated in "*Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb fī 'l-sulūk ila ṭarīq aṣḥābiḥi*" of Trābzūnlū Dervīš Aḥmed (Hacı Mahmud, 2448 Istanbul, fol. 17a). See also *Muṭahharat al-mufās*, 304.

28) *Zimām al-Sālikīn*, 9.

29) Muḥammad b. ʿUmar, "*Laṭāʾif al-iʿlām*," fol. 326b; also *al-Sayr wa 'l-sulūk ila malik al-mulūk* of Qāsim b. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ḥānī al-Ḥalabī (ed. M. ʿId al-Šāfiʿī. Cairo: Dār al-Ṭibāʿa . . . lil-Jāmiʿa al-Šūfiyya, n.d.), 129.

30) The basis for questioning the validity of *'ilm* for training rests on the saying "*ʿarāftu rabbi bi-rabbi*" (Through God I know God) and Jesus' dictum, "Ye must be born twice" (See "*Irṣād al-sālikīn*" of al-Gardīzī, Cambridge ms. King's No. 1, fol. 50b and 81a).

the *murīd's* need, particularly at the beginning of his *irāda* when doubt might still linger on. Besides knowledge of *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and identifying with the beliefs of "those who adhere to *ahl al-sunna wa 'l-jamā'a*, (those who follow the Prophetic tradition and do not differ from the great body of believers)" he is expected to have full command of aids leading to perfecting hearts, knowledge of the self's shortcomings and ailments, and of ways to treat, regulate, and maintain the soundness thereof. Compassionate to both people in general and the *murīd* in particular, the *ṣayḥ* was not expected to commence treating the latter in the Ḥalwatī order until after he had accompanied him for a while to ascertain the receptiveness of the *murīd* for training. This was most important since the *ṣayḥ* must never deceive, in keeping with the prophetic saying: "he who deceives is not one of us." If a *murīd* is deemed unsuitable for training he must be advised to return to his lifestyle and profession or allowed, should he insist, to attend and cater to the needs of those in training.³¹ Quṣayrī and others advocate that the *ṣayḥ* not overlook weaknesses of the *murīd* and, if in doubt, should try him first to determine the truthfulness of his intent to dissociate from all ties and learn *adḥkār* (formulae of recollection). Only after his heart bears witness to his truthfulness does the *ṣayḥ* accept the *murīd* for training.

Besides the general conditions laid down for occupying the position of *iršād*, we must treat both the category of rules pertaining to the *ṣayḥ's* moral and psychological prerequisites and the procedural steps to be followed in training the *murīd*. First, the latter. The *ṣayḥ* must immediately treat the four barriers to al-Ḥaqq in "*riyāḍat nafs al-murīd*," (training of the disciple's base faculties) as it is put: *māl* (possessions), *jāh* (prestige), *ta'aṣṣub li-'l-madhābib* (prejudice in favor of a rite) and *ma'ṣiya* (an act of defiance or error). He can protect the *murīd* therefrom by prescribing, in the words of Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 896), "quenching the desires of the stomach (*iğmāḍ al-baṭn*), wakefulness (*al-sahr*), silence (*al-samt*), and seclusion (*al-ic'tizāl 'an al-nās*)," either by *awrād* (litanies, prescribed prayer-formulae), economizing on *farā'id* (the prescribed religious duties), *rawātib* (religious exercises) or *ḥalwa* (seclusion). Arranging for the *murīd* a source of *kasb* (acquisition, gain), i.e. to meet minimal nutritional and other

31) That is those already undergoing *riyāḍāt* and *mujāhadāt*, *Ibid.*, 128.

requirements sufficient unto his basic needs was also deemed important. ³²⁾

Among the first duties of the *šayḥ* is to teach the *murīd* the proper recitation of prayers, the basic requisites (*farāʾīd*), to distinguish between the lawful (*ḥalāl*) and forbidden (*ḥarām*), to be rid of devious behavior (*riyāʿ*), to abide by his *ḥalwa*, how and when to fast and bear hunger, and ways to obey only God. ³³⁾ The *muršīd* thus assists the *murīd* to abandon disposition (*ṭabʿ*) for prescription (*šarʿ*). If he discerns true striving (*mujaḥada*) and determination (*ʿazīma*) in the *murīd* by the light of God's revelations and knowledge, the *šayḥ* proceeds then to teach the *murīd* spiritual exercises (*riyāḍāt*) with firmness, not laxity. ³⁴⁾

In teaching the *murīd* a mode of *dhikr* (recollection of God), the *šayḥ* must ensure that the latter continues to mention Allah with sufficient force and determination until heart and tongue become one (*yastawī lisānuhu maʿa qalbihi*), and the *murīd* succeeds thereby in achieving a *ḥāl* with all his members "becoming *dhākira* (recollecting God)." ³⁵⁾

By way of tangible training, the *murīd* concentrates on learning *adḥkār* and *awrād* tailored by the *šayḥ* to his ability to absorb and apply. ³⁶⁾ If the *murīd* manifests adroitness, the *šayḥ* could employ rational proofs, for *ʿilm* allegedly helps display lingering doubts. Should the *šayḥ* discern in him strength and firmness in the path, he might command the *murīd* to be patient and continue his *dhikr* till the "lights of acceptance prevail in his heart and the suns of *wuṣūl* rise in his *sirr*" (the innermost core of the heart). ³⁷⁾ Suhrawardī advocates gentleness (*rifq*) not *ʿilm* on grounds the former might win the *murīd* over while the latter would alienate him. ³⁸⁾ This again is derived

32) From an untitled ms., author unknown, called "*Risāla fī ādāb al-ṣuḥba*" (Cambridge Or. Add. 3540), fol. 31a.

33) From an untitled ms. by an unknown author commencing with "*Bāb fī bidāyat al-Šūfiyīn al-murīdīn*" (Bodleian. Ms. Arab. e. 189), fol. 105a.

34) "*Lāmīyat al-ʿaḡam*," fol. 67b ("*mā yaǧību ʿalā al-šayḥ fī taʿdīb al-murīd*").

35) "*Risāla nāfiʿa*" of ʿAbd al-Waḥḥāb al-Šaʿrānī (British Museum, Or. 6306), fol. 184a.

36) In some orders learning a *dhikr* can entail up to twenty steps, each governed by its own rules. See Šaʿrānī's "*al-Nafaḥāt al-qudsīya*," fols. 9b-10b.

37) *al-Risāla al-Quṣayriya* (Cairo: Ṣabīḥ, n.d.), 182; see also "*al-Nafaḥāt al-qudsīya*," fol. 16b.

38) *ʿAwārīf al-maʿārif*, 48. Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 1200) took Sufi *šayḥs* to task for

from a precedent set by the Prophet himself in addressing each follower according to his capacity to assimilate and react in the desired manner. 39)

Once admitted to his companionship, the *ṣayḥ* assumed full responsibility for supervising, guiding and revealing the secrets of spiritual life to him and keeping the *murīd* in close proximity to himself. He must serve as a source of continuous encouragement, strength and succor to the *murīd*, keep him firmly on the path, and not be the cause for his deviating from it. Should he discern such deviation therefrom, particularly as concerns *ṣarʿ* (law) he should correct him and turn him away from error, particularly if it pertains to *uṣūl* and *furūʿ* (the basic and the particular parts of Islamic law).

Gentleness was the overall trait stressed in governing the attitude of the *ṣayḥ* towards the *murīd*. As al-Šādhilī (d. 1258) put it, "the souls of the *murīds* are of the sentiments of God; 40) he who glorifies the sentiments of God his heart will be filled with piety, and he who pleases his brother the *murīd* with the amount of a breath (*bi-qadari nafasin*), God will reward him amply for it, the like of which seventy years of prayer could not." 41) While he might be strict and forceful, since most authorities insisted he could not overlook his shortcomings, 42) still he should treat him with care, compassion, and sympathy. If he must reprimand him, this should be done by the *ṣayḥ*

both downplaying and downgrading *ʿilm*, which he construed as merely a pretext for them to justify preaching their own distorted views of the *sunna*; for whenever they resorted to *isnād* (chain of transmission), he argued, they invariably ended up with a weak *ḥadīth*, or one their understanding of which was bad. See his *Talbīs Iblīs* (ed. Ḥayr al-Dīn ʿAlī. Beirut: Dār al Waʿy al-ʿArabī n.d.), 238.

39) Cited in the *ʿAwārif*, 416.

40) *Nufūs al-murīdīn min ṣaʿāʾir al-Lāh*.

41) M. b. Aḥmad, *Manāqib ṣayḥ al-ṭarīqa al-Šādhiliya* (2nd printing, Cairo: Muṣṭafa al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1353/1934), 20.

42) Suhrawardī preferred a circuitous approach for reprimanding him: rather than speak an unkindly word to the *murīd*, the *ṣayḥ* should address himself to that particular objectionable act in general terms before a broader audience; and even if failure is further discerned, still he would prefer that the *ṣayḥ* forgive the *murīd* and gently urge him onto the right path, "for the word falls upon the hearing of the truthful *murīd* as grain on the soil: a bad seed perishes, and unsound words are like bad seeds." *ʿAwārif*, 415. The most common punishment was fasting over a period of time deemed proper for the offense committed. And even then he must gauge carefully the individual's capacity to bear the pains of punishment meted out. See *Muṭṭaharat al-nufūs*, 305; also "*Mirṣād al-ʿibād*," fol. 100a.

calling attention to a deviant mode of behavior in general terms, in a session of the *jamā'a* (group) and not by direct confrontation with the *murīd* whenever it is possible to avoid it. He was enjoined not to address the *murīd* before looking into his own heart, which in turn should seek guidance from God before he admonishes the *murīd*, "for as the tongue is the spokesman of the heart, so is the heart the spokesman of the Ḥaqq." 43)

Conditions set down for occupying the position of *iršād* may have varied in minutiae from order to order, but not in substance. All agree that a *šayḥ* cannot formally become a *muršīd* unless so authorized by a *šayḥ mukammal* (a perfected master), or one who has attained to the highest level of Sufi perfection, in the analogy of God appointing the Prophet for his mission of instruction. Attending this necessary requirement is that the *muršīd* should have no visible defects which might compromise his *šayḥiyya* (office, or virtue of the master) by a correlative amount. A basic prerequisite deemed pertinent to the *adab al-šayḥ mukammal murīdihi* is that the *šayḥ* must not accept to train a *murīd* until his own "heart bears witness to him" and the latter pledges firmly to accept pain, humility, poverty, and hardship. The *murīd* must first traverse the first *maqām* (spiritual station), which is *taṣwba* (repentance).

Equally important, the *šayḥ* must be truthful in his intent; it was considered a sign of great dishonesty for him to place himself in the position of *iršād* without having been called to it by God, or for the sake of being flattered. 44) He was to be sound in his *i'tiqādāt* (religious convictions) according to the tenets of "*ahl al-sunna wa 'l-jamā'a*" to save the *murīd* from committing *bid'a* (heretic innovations). Naturally, he was expected to possess sufficient intelligence (*ʿaql*) to help organize the path for the *murīd* and keep him on it. It was also incumbent upon him to have attained *fanāʾ* (annihilation in God) but yet *baqāʾ* ('remaining', life in God). 45)

Perfection was to accompany his speech, deeds and states. Some went so far as to insist he be a *walī* (friend of God, saint) before he could

43) *ʿAwārif*, 416.

44) Evidence of his truthfulness: not turning upon a *murīd* who leaves him for another *šayḥ*.

45) The Naqšabandiya feared possible *kufr* (infidelity) on his part were he to sit in the position of *iršād* after he attained *baqāʾ*. See "*Risāla fī ādāb al-mašyāḥa*," fol. 129b.

qualify as a *murīd* but frowned upon his demanding the *murīd* call him *walī*, kiss his hand or display like gestures of ego-building.⁴⁶⁾ All devil-inspired sentiments, i.e. rudeness, cursing, maligning harshness, he must conceal from the *murīd* and address him only with endearing terms, like calling him "son". He must guide the breaths and motions of the *murīd* in keeping with truthfulness and prod him constantly to persist in his exercises and strivings till he attains to the ends, namely *fanāʿ* and *bagāʿ*.

Attending the prerequisites of the *šayḥ* in this regard is that he should have full knowledge of the *murīd*'s behavioral motivation and patterns and even by "sniffing" (*šamm*) should recognize those suitable from those who are not for training.⁴⁷⁾

Authorities insisted the *šayḥ* be generous with the *murīd*, giving him what he might need by way of clothing, shelter and food, so he would not be distracted from his exercises. As concerns eating, the *šayḥ* was to observe certain proprieties, like not having meals at a *murīd*'s place, except perhaps once a year on very special occasions, nor prolonging the process of eating in the *murīd*'s presence, as it would constitute a disrespectful act when it was incumbent on the *šayḥ*, if he were to maintain the respect of the *murīd*, to retain at all times his dignity, demeanor and calmness. Indeed he must never lose the *murīd*'s *taʿahhul* (consideration) for himself, particularly in *samāʿ* (the spiritual concert, often accompanied by whirling dance).⁴⁸⁾

In addition, the *šayḥ* was expected not to mix much with *murīds* except at *dhikr* time in a *ḥalqa* (circle of Sūfis), and only when exhibiting a *ḥāl*, again so as not to detract from his own esteem in the *murīd*'s eyes. There could be no laxity, even if it appeared warranted, so that the gate of *fayḍ* (spiritual influx) would not be barred to him.

By his compassion (*šafaqa*) he was to be safeguarded from fornication (*zināʾ*). Some insisted the *šayḥ* observe continence (*ʿiffa*) and not allow passions to dominate him; equilibrium in the conduct of the *šayḥ* would erase doubts in the mind of the *murīd* at the commence-

46) Such gestures "are for kings not *šayḥs*" asserts ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Šaʿrānī, "*Risālat tataʿallaq bi-mašāyih al-ṭarīq wa aḥwālihīm*" (British Museum, Or. 6306), fol. 294a.

47) Šaʿrānī, "*Risāla*," fol. 129b.

48) According to Šaʿrānī ("*Risāla fī ādāb al-ṣuḥba*," fol. 24b) this is one of the five rules governing *samāʿ* which the *šayḥ* must closely safeguard.

ment of his *irāda*. This also entails full cognition on the *ṣayḥ*'s part of the pitfalls of *sulūk* (the spiritual journey) so as to prevent a *waqʿa* (shock) or avert a *ʿuqda* (problem) for the *murīd*, which reason is behind their insistence the latter must never conceal the slightest from his *muršīd*.

Altruism (*ithār*) was to be observed, in that the *ṣayḥ* had to treat the *murīd*'s interests as he would his very own. Generosity (*karam*) was equally stressed in the context stated by Aḥmad al-Ġazālī (d. 1126): "the gifts received from God are to be passed on as a right thereto by the recipient."⁴⁹ Trust in God (*tawakkul*) meant the *murīd* need not fear for want of basic sustenance required at various levels of training. The *ṣayḥ* was to be yielding (observe *tashīm*), that is, offer counsel and succor to whomever needed it, and content (observe *riḍā*), by objecting not to divine pre-eternal decrees (*aḥkām azalīya*). The dignity (*waqār*) exhibited thusly by the *ṣayḥ* in itself is a source of strength for the *murīd*, who would then magnify farther the greatness of the former's *wilāya* (saintliness). Observing *sukūna* (calmness) meant the *murīd* would not be rushed into a situation of committing an error. *Thabāt* (steadfastness) inspired confidence and positive response from the *murīd*. A stern countenance (*hayba*) would guarantee persistence in the *irāda* and avoidance of defiances on the *murīd*'s part.

Being highminded (*ālī ʿl-himma*) meant no turning to the outside world and its inhabitants except when absolutely necessary. The *ṣayḥ* could covet gain neither for the *murīd* nor for himself therefrom. Indeed, he must never ask for material compensation or overt expressions of gratitude from the *murīd* unless it be to the advantage of or serve a benefit for the *murīd*, in keeping with the Qurʾānic verse: "We feed you for the sake of God and desire not compensation or gratitude from thee" (Sura 76/9). Moreover he must zealously safeguard the *murīd*'s secrets as the latter is taught to safeguard the *ṣayḥ*'s secret, for it has been alleged that "the hearts of the elect are the tombs of secrets." Besides, the secret of the *murīd* was deemed a trust placed in the care of the *muršīd*.

Training always had to be at a level consonant with the *murīd*'s ability to comprehend. The *ṣayḥ* must know what assignment to make

49) Cited in "*Mirṣād al-ʿibād*," fol. 100b.

for each *murīd*, after carefully assessing how much he can cope with and when to assign it, never giving him to do what he has not been readied for.⁵⁰⁾ He must conserve the means of instruction, resorting merely to signs, motions or nods if they should suffice. It was also deemed necessary that the *ṣayḥ* first undergo a period of complete seclusion.⁵¹⁾ If at any time the *murīd* reached a *ḥāl* above that of the *muršid*, the latter could no longer train him and the *murīd* was then enjoined to go to another *ṣayḥ*.⁵²⁾ It was not unusual for a *murīd* to take on another *ṣayḥ* for *iršād*, particularly if his own died before he finished training him. As a matter of fact, in extreme disciplinary cases the *murīd* would be ejected altogether if in his heart the *ṣayḥ* became convinced that the *murīd* had no respect for him and was merely going through the semblances of training.⁵³⁾

What we have cited here from a variety of sources⁵⁴⁾ are the essential ingredients most authorities agree constitute the *sine qua non* of the *ṣayḥ-muršid's* etiquette *vis-à-vis* his disciple. *Iršād* was considered an essential prerequisite for anyone aspiring to become a *ṣayḥ al-ṭarīqa* (master of the Path, or: of the Order).⁵⁵⁾ Almost all Sufi

50) *Šaʿrānī*, "Risāla," fol. 283a; "Lāmīyat al-ajam," fol. 67b.

51) Twelve years "during which he has seen no one" argues a Naqšabandī critic. See "Risāla fī ādāb al-mašyāḥa," fol. 129b.

52) There is reference in the "Maqāmāt al-Naqšabandī" to a *murīd* of Abū Turāb (al-Naḥṣabī) who was advised to go to Abū Yazīd (al-Biṣṭamī) for further training when he got passed him in a *ḥāl* and was told seeing Abū Yazīd was better than seeing God seventy times over. Cited by al-Ġazālī in his *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* and on his saying by numerous others. See "Risāla fī al-mašyāḥa," fol. 130b.

53) Al-Rāzī is alleged to have counseled *ṣayḥs* never to accompany anyone who "pretends to the way through abiding simply with semblances" for then he would cease to be a true *ṣayḥ*. Cited by the unknown author of "al-Nafahāt al-qudsīya" (fol. 86a) on the authority of Ibn ʿArabī's "al-Ḥukm al-marbūṭ fīmā yalzam ahl ṭarīq Allāh min al-šurūt."

54) "Al-Nafahāt al-qudsīya," fols. 82-86; *Muṭṭaharat al-nufūs*, 305-307; "Mīršād al-ʿibād," 99b-101b; "Risāla fī ādāb al-mašyāḥa wa 'l-murīdīn," fols. 128a-131a; ʿAwārif al-maʿārif, 415-20; *al-Risāla al-Quṣayrīya* (Maḥmūd & Šarīf edition), 742; "Iršād al-sālikīn," fols. 82b-84a; see also Cambridge copy (King's No. 1) chapter titled "dar bayān-i maqām-i ṣayḥ va šarāyit va šifāt-i ān," here attributed to Yūsūf b. Šayḥ M. Najm al-Dīn Gardīzī, fols. 79-84. "Risālat qawānīn ḥikam al-išrāq," fol. 38; "Risāla... bi-mašāyih al-ṭarīq," fols. 281-82; "Lāmīyat al-ajam," fols. 67b-68a.

55) Moreover, one does not become a *muršid* by frequenting sessions of *riwāya* (e.g. of *Ḥadīth*) but only through heavenly decree (*amr samāwī*) and spiritual exercises on the aspirant's part. *Zīmām al-sālikīn*, 10.

orders considered it an important condition of *iršād* that the *šayḥ* be possessed at all times of *adab* and conduct himself in a manner as to render him “light upon light (*nūr ʿalā nūr*)” (Sura 24/35) for the *murīd*, in keeping with the saying in the *Qurʾān*: “God guides to his light who seeks Our contentment.” Their claim to virtue rested in their pointing the way to endeavor, in keeping with the mandate “such is the grace of God, He bestows it upon whomsoever He desireth” (Sura 62/4).

One might conclude that observing etiquette is a reciprocal affair. While the *murīd* might have been more constrained thereby, his position on the recipient end of training by necessity decreed it to be thus. It is equally evident that a greater burden was placed on the *šayḥ*, for it is he who must demonstrate at every level and stage of training his own spiritual qualifications and ability to command and hold the respect and willingness of the *murīd* to be trained by him! Indeed it has been said that “the *murīd* is the mirror of the *šayḥ*, and he who seeks to know a *šayḥ* he has not met should look first at his *murīd*.”⁵⁶) For that reason most authorities insisted that if the *šayḥ-muršid* was unable to observe such *adab*, it was more preferable that he remove himself from such a position of *wilāya* and concentrate on striving with and training his own self; better yet, he should search for a *šayḥ* who could teach him *adab*, set him straight and inculcate him with good manners (*yuʿadibbuhu, yuqawwimuhu wayuhadhdhibuhu*).

56) Šaʿrānī, “*Risāla*,” fol. 287b.

THE RELIGIOUS MOTIF IN THE POETRY OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

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Religion in Tagore's Poetry

Tagore's primary impression upon the English speaking world was made by his abilities as a poet.¹⁾ The Nobel prize of 1913 was given in recognition of his poetic contribution. Writing in the *Vishva-Bharati Quarterly*, he described himself in 1923 as a singer. Listen as he sings in his lyrics "When the streams of ideals that flow from the East and from the West mingle their murmur in some profound harmony of meaning it delights my soul."²⁾ Tagore's poetry gives us a glimpse into his religious songs of meaning. Religion is the inner experience of man expressed by outward social concerns. It is free of territorial bounds, is dynamic and communicative. Poetry expresses the religion of man in the forms of the artist.

Negative Criticism of Sectarrians

Let us catch a glimpse of Tagore's negative appraisal of those whom he calls the sectarians. Their expressions of religion are rejected because they are limited, localized restrictions which cut man off from the free flow of meaningful cultural existence. A general indictment against all narrow minded religious people is given succinctly in one of his "fireflies," those "specks of living light twinkling in the dark."³⁾ One of his three line poems powerfully describes the narrow temperament, which isolates itself from other men, yet claims the whole measure of truth.⁴⁾

1) A poet like Tagore is what Indians have traditionally called a wise man, one who possesses spiritual insight into the complex mysteries of life.

2) R. Tagore, "The Indo-Iranians," *Vishva Bharati Quarterly* (October, 1923, 205.

3) Tagore, *Fireflies* (New York: Macmillan, 1928), 8.

4) *Ibid.*, 209.

The sectarian thinks
that he has the sea
ladled into his private pond.

Tagore likes to compare the sectarian to the world of nature. He sees in the narrow man and the dewdrop reflections of the same incongruous claim. On the one hand there is a claim of absolute certainty, while on the other hand such assurance has been asserted from a very confining base of exposure. His poetic firefly flits ⁵⁾

The dewdrop knows the sun
only within its own tiny orb.

The sectarian is one who condemns others' reasons from a constricted world view and reaches conclusions ostensibly applicable to all men.

The religious man of action is scrutinized by Tagore, for he too stifles ultimate concern. Song and dance, offering and temple should become concerns in which men are grasped with ultimate meaning. The sects had recorded the notes, but had lost their meaning. Tagore writes, ⁶⁾

Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads!
Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark
corner of a temple with doors all shut?
... Come out of thy meditations and leave
aside thy flowers and incense!

Who is it that men worship in darkened corners, by means of beads, incense and flowers? "Who" is the proper question, for both the object of worship and the worshipper himself are persons. The sectarians have depersonalized religion; their worship is directed to material objects.

Those who have rejected the world and live a life of renunciation also feel the poetic rebuke of Tagore. The daily life of sensual involvement is not to be negated in favor of retreat from the temptations of the senses. On the contrary, Tagore sings, ⁷⁾

Deliverance is not for me in renunciation.
I feel the embrace of freedom
in a thousand bonds of delight.

It is through the senses of sight, sound and touch that the desires of joy and love are set free. The mass of poor men, those lowly in status

5) *Ibid.*, 124.

6) Tagore, *Gitanjali* (New York. Macmillan, 1916), 31.

7) *Ibid.*, 89.

and those who search and travel on pilgrimage whisper the sounds of religious concern in Tagore's poetry.

Positive Religious Expression

The rejection of the sectarian's excesses is not the only subject of Tagore's poetry, for it functions as a black background for Tagore's livelier colors expressing positive religious experience and manifestation. Reason is not to be totally rejected. He addresses the ultimate as "That truth which has kindled the light of reason in my mind.⁸⁾ Nor are all actions to be discarded, for he sings, "It shall be my endeavor to reveal thee in my actions."⁹⁾ Neither meditation nor silence are excluded as having part in religion. Tagore's criticism of those who cut off all relations with the world falls short of total rejection of their mode of operations.

But Tagore wanted to repersonalize their endeavor. Their approach had become too abstract; he sought to channel their energies toward a personalized goal. Quietude and meditation are set into a theistic context and within that relationship find meaning for Tagore. "Now it is time to sit quiet, face to face with thee, and to sing dedication of life in this silent and overflowing leisure," Tagore says to his personal ultimate.¹⁰⁾

In a poem written in 1932 over which Tagore painted a temple set in a background of a breaking dawn, he wrote, "The night has ended. Put out the light of the lamp of thine own narrow corner smudged with smoke. The great morning which is for all appears in the East. Let its light reveal us to each other who walk on in the same path of pilgrimage."¹¹⁾ This poem written late in his life (he was seventy-three years old) contains several elements of Tagore's positive religious aspirations and expressions. The basic element of religion is man, man not as some unchanging artifact of history, but as a living being in the process of becoming something else, something more satisfying. Man is searching for meaning. He has clues to meanings all about him. Taking those clues, he realizes that there are depths of satisfaction

8) *Ibid.*, 26.

9) *Ibid.*

10) *Ibid.*, 27.

11) Tagore, *Drawings and Paintings of Rabindranath Tagore* (New Delhi: Lalit Kala Akademi, 1961), plate 23.

beyond his present limitations, and so he sets out on a pilgrimage with others to learn. This pilgrimage leads him to realms beyond the senses, and to a unifying experience with the ultimate, which is conceived as personal. Religious experience cannot be bottled up, capped and kept within an individual however, and Tagore gives us only glimpses of the spiritual life which after its union, results in social service and humanitarian concerns.

Man

To Tagore, religion is as complex as the full range of human beings one knows in his cultural milieu. Man is neither totally good, nor absolutely bad, but is a complex of commingling assets and debits. The man Tagore sketches in his poetry is neither an unattainable ideal, nor an illusory play of the creator. In a letter, written about 1890, Tagore wrote, "The stream of all my creations and my feelings have found their end in man."¹²) Man is the focal point of Tagore's poetry. He again expressed this centrality of man in his world view as well as his literary production in one of his last poems when he said,¹³)

Now has come Man Supreme
Man after God's own heart!

Tagore's poetry sings of a man who experiences separation and loneliness. Sensitive to the shifting tides of life, Tagore's man feels himself separated from a greater reality and lonely in his isolation. Tagore writes, "When the weariness of the road is upon me, and the thirst of the sultry day . . . then I cry not for your voice only, my friend, but for your touch . . . There is an anguish in my heart for the burden of its riches not given to you. Put out your hand through the night . . . let me feel its touch along the lengthening stretch of my loneliness."¹⁴) The same theme of unfulfilled thirst of being is found in poem one of the *Fugitive and Other Poems*. "Darkly you sweep on, Eternal Fugitive . . . Is your heart lost to the lover calling you across his immeasurable loneliness?"¹⁵)

¹²) Tagore, *Wings of Death*, Aurobindo Bose, Trans. (London: Murray, 1960), 88. R. Tagore, *Thought Relics* (New York: Macmillan, 1921), 21. "We are not mere facts in this world like pieces of stone, we are persons."

¹³) Tagore, *Wings of . . .*, 88.

¹⁴) Tagore, Fruit Gathering, quoted in *Collected Poems and Plays of Rabindranath Tagore* (London: Macmillan, 1937), 164-65.

¹⁵) Tagore, *The Fugitive and Other Poems*, quoted in *Collected Poems . . .*, 327.

The Quest

Man, lonely and sensing his separation from other things, other men and even at his deepest level from himself sets out to search for meanings yet unrealized.¹⁶⁾

Man seems deeply to be aware of a separation at the root of his being, he cries to be led across it to a union, and somehow he knows that it is love which can lead him to a love which is final.

Even before man takes up his pilgrimage, he has learned several things. The search for meaning is not confined to the intellect, but it is one which will engage the whole of his being. He also knows that the search will take the form of a human quest—a person to person dialogue. The artistic talents and propensities as well as the experiences of human love will be employed in the search. Prior to man's departure on pilgrimage, he has uttered his first prayer, "Lead me from the unreal to Truth."¹⁷⁾

The personal goal is the fulfillment of Tagore's quest. The real is addressed with a personal pronoun—"thou" so that the quest is a personal dialogue of man and the personal ultimate. Remembering earlier autobiographical days, Tagore recalls in a poetic interchange "...entering my heart unbidden... thou didst press the signet of eternity upon many a fleeting moment of my life."¹⁸⁾ Such an idea is important for Tagore. Life is not a static, unchanging repetition of predetermined molds, but is a progressing growth and continual process. One's life is lived beyond himself and he progresses along the path of life interacting with other men and the ultimate. Such a life is understood and experienced in a personal way.

Union for Tagore is expressed as the temporal coincidence of subject and object. Man and the personal ultimate meet but never dissolve into abstract oneness. The poet employs the analogy of human love. Love is the reciprocal and binary expression between two human beings. Tagore is a poet of love. He speaks of the Ultimate as the "master poet," and in the words of love he sings,¹⁹⁾ "My song has put off her ornaments. She has no pride of dress and decoration. Ornaments

16) Tagore, *Thought Relics*, in *A Tagore Reader*, A. Chakravarty, Ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1961), 20.

17) *Ibid.*, 25.

18) Tagore, *Gitanjali*, 55-56.

19) *Ibid.*, 28.

would mar out union; they would come between thee and me; their jingling would drown the whispers."

The lover and the loved want nothing to disturb their communication and union. It is neither their dress nor decoration that attracts them and fulfills their desires, it is but one another. Tagore says of the union, ²⁰⁾

... for this thy love loses itself in the love of thy lover, and there art thou seen in the perfect union of two.

Union, which seems to be so elusive for the scholar to express verbally in reasoned propositional form is in the hands of the poet beautifully described in a dialogue between the sun and the dewdrop. ²¹⁾

"I dream of thee, but to serve thee I can never hope," the dewdrop wept and said; "I am too small to take thee unto me great Lord, and my life is all tears."

"I illumine the limitless sky, yet I can yield myself up to a tiny drop of dew, " Thus the sun said, "I shall become but a sparkle of light and fill you, and your little life will be a laughing art."

The union of the worshipper with the worshipped is discussed primarily in Tagore's poetry by means of the love-devotion motif. But there is also an aspect of the experience which is beyond the ability of words to capture. The union is real, but language cannot adequately describe, nor can symbolize it sufficiently. Although verbal communication ceases, intuition experiences. This is the non-verbal manifestation of the religion of Tagore. His poetry throbs with these suggestive ideas. The poet vainly tries to experience the personal ultimate, but finds out that words fail, music and song are inadequate and he remains silently baffled.

Often Tagore's poetry reaches its best in his *Fireflies*. In a whispered dialogue between the shore and the sea, the shore begs "Write to me what thy waves struggle to say. The sea writes in foam again and again and wipes off the lines in a boisterous despair." ²²⁾ Theories, propositions, words and utterances are futile attempts to convey the meaning of man's religious ultimate experience.

If words fail to convey the meaning of the union, what then does

²⁰⁾ *Ibid.*, 73.

²¹⁾ Tagore, *Fruit Gathering*, 166.

²²⁾ Tagore, *Fireflies*, 216.

the religious writer do to communicate? He writes about silence in paradoxes of words and nonverbal spaces. The worshipper's gratitude reaches a sphere in which he cries, "Let not my thanks to thee rob my silence of it higher homage." 23) Attempting to set this expression of silence in a context, Tagore speaks through the lips of the loving devotee, "Now it is time to sit quiet, face to face with thee, and to sing dedication of life in this silent and overflowing leisure." 24)

The silence is not only on man's side of the union, but the personal ultimate also remains silent. This does not dishearten or disturb the man, for he sings, "If thou speakest not I will fill my heart with thy silence and endure it." 25)

Religion for Tagore is a personal manifestation, and yet it does not cut man off from the social dimension of his life—it is not ruggedly individualistic in nature. The result of the union between the Personal Ultimate and religiously grasped man is an ever widening aura of activity and area of services which link that enlightened man to the affairs of other men. The religious man's sphere of activities is not to be isolated from the crowded marketplaces of the world, where most men live. Religion cannot cut itself off from other men because of wealth, class, status, or professed allegiance to religious labels. Rather, its sympathy is with all men, in order to teach, direct and lead them to the loving relationship with the loving Person.

Tagore had been involved in several social concerns of national and international import, and from that experience he learned not to naively accept all such social drives equally. His incisive judgment is worthwhile when he says, "Men who have strong social instincts are not necessarily lovers of men... Reckless spending creates a vacuum which we fill up with the debris of activities, whose object is to bury time." 26) Religious man too can become entangled in a maze of activities which are abstracted from man to whom love is required. One's fellow concern stems from the union with Personal Love.

Conclusion

The religion of man, artistically expressed by the poet pictures a

23) *Ibid.*, 252.

24) Tagore, *Gitanjali*, 27.

25) *Ibid.*, 3

26) Tagore, *Thought Relics*, 48.

man on his pilgrimage in search of meaning and fulfillment. His union with the Personal Ultimate cannot be expressed wholly by words, but when verbal forms are employed, song, dance and poetry breathe love, joy and trust. Having exhausted verbal forms, the religious and artistic man realizes that beyond the verbal barriers there exists a sphere incapable of being pressed into words. How can one speak of it? Tagore calls it "silence" or "silent salutation." Religion cannot be confined to an individualistic concern with the "I" alone, for the relationship is one of love in which the I is united with the Thou. Such an I-Thou religion is ventilated in other personal relations with man in his everyday activities, man in all states and stages of life, an I-you experience. By loving man one can carry God's love into the sphere of common life. The social instincts of man are not to be killed by confining concerns, but the realm of altruistic interest is that in which the religion of man is to be both practiced and continually developed. These are some of the fireflies twinkling in the darkened sky of the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore—some of his song offerings to Personal Love.

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DER SCHLUND DES ORCUS

*Zu einer Eigentümlichkeit der römisch-etruskischen
Unterweltsvorstellung*

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Wie es unter der Erde, im Reich der Abgeschiedenen aussieht und zugeht, hat die mythenbildende Phantasie des Altertums verständlicherweise intensiv beschäftigt. Der Mensch ist nun einmal ein Kind eben dieser Erde, seine Füße berühren ihre Oberfläche, er gewinnt aus ihr seine Nahrung und er geht schließlich am Ende seines Daseins in ihren Schoß ein, wie auch wir heute noch sagen. Der Himmel und seine Götter sind zwar mächtig und daher auch verehrungswürdig, aber die räumliche Distanz ist unüberbrückbar. Der unmittelbaren Erfahrung des Sterblichen bleibt aus antiker Sicht — von den wenigen der Apotheose gewürdigten Günstlingen des Olymp abgesehen — jene höhere Daseinsebene für immer entrückt. Die Erde dagegen ist nah; es gibt zahlreiche Wege zu den Regionen der Tiefe; man könnte durch Höhlen, Schluchten, Kraterseen und vulkanische Gänge jederzeit hinuntergelangen. Die Sage weiß daher von gefahrenenerprobten Männern der heroischen Vorzeit, die der Notwendigkeit folgend einen Descensus ad inferos wagten und glücklich zurückkehrten. Und wenn das Leben der Mehrzahl der gewöhnlichen Menschen diese Reise ersparte oder verwehrte, so gelangen jedenfalls im Tode alle dorthin: die Unterwelt ist Endstation des Erdenlaufs, auf undenkliche Zeit hinaus die Herberge schattenhaft gewordener menschlicher Existenz.

Es erscheint also begreiflich, daß die Gedanken, von Ängsten und Wünschen beherrscht, um die unausweichliche eschatologische Örtlichkeit kreisen. Seltsamerweise gelingt es aber dem Mythos leichter, den fernen Himmel mit den vertrauten Zügen der diesseitigen Welt auszustatten als das Domizil der Toten. Das Fehlen des Lichtes schließt offenbar auch den Mangel an klar umrissenen visuellen Konturen ein. Der Gesamteindruck einer nebligen Finsternis verbindet sich im allgemeinen mit der Vorstellung von den mehr oder weniger ungreifbaren

Dimensionen ausgedehnter, im einzelnen aber nicht näher beschreibbarer Hohlräume, den Reservaten eines zahllosen, ständig anwachsenden Seelenheeres.

Die unmittelbare Nähe dieser Wohnstatt der Seelen schafft nun zwangsläufig auch ein Gefühl des Bedrohtseins. Der Glaube an eine mögliche Rückkehr der Toten zu bestimmten Zeiten und unter gewissen Umständen nährt die atavistische Furcht vor dem Geist des Verstorbenen, der die Lebenden heimsucht, um seine Rechte einzufordern. Nachts steigen — so wähnte man — Gespensterschwärme empor und lauern an den Dreiwegen auf Opfer. Raffende Dämonen von verschiedenartiger, immer aber furchterregender Gestalt folgen bereitwillig dem Anruf des Fluches oder den Beschwörungen der Zauberei.

Man rechnete mit dem ständigen Heraufdringen chthonischer Mächte und versuchte ihm mit vorsorglichen Maßnahmen der Bannung und Besänftigung zu begegnen. Wo der innere Zusammenhang zwischen der Grabsphäre und den Boten des Infernos dem Bewußtsein besonders gegenwärtig ist, kann die Sepulkralkunst zum Spiegel der potentiellen Bedrohung aus dem Jenseits werden. Etruskische Aschenkisten aus Volterra, Chiusi und Perugia¹⁾ tragen Reliefs, auf denen die folgende Szene mit geringen Abweichungen wiederkehrt: Bewaffnete Männer umstehen eine brunnenartig eingefaßte Öffnung im Erdboden. Aus ihr taucht der Oberkörper eines wolfgestaltigen, wolfsköpfigen oder mit einer Wolfskappe bedeckten Unholds empor. Mit seinen Pranken hat er bereits einen der Umstehenden niedergestreckt. Eine schwere Kette ist um seinen Hals gelegt, und mit gezückten Schwertern versuchen die Krieger ihn in Schach zu halten. Einer von ihnen gießt aus einer Schale eine Libation über das Haupt des Monstrums aus; es handelt sich dabei offenbar um einen Akt exorzistischer Praxis. Diesen bannenden, apotropäischen Handlungen korrespondiert die geflügelte, den griechisch-römischen Furien verwandte etruskische Todesgöttin (Vanθ)²⁾ an der Peripherie oder im Hintergrund des Bildes; auch sie ist gefesselt gleich dem Tierwesen und scheint dadurch

1) P. Ducati, RAL 19, 1910, 161 ff. 24, 1915, 543 ff. D. Anziani, MAH 30, 1910, 257 ff. Abb. 1-4. G. Körte, I Rilievi delle Urne Etrusche 3, 1916 16 ff. Tf. VIII-X.

2) P. Ducati, Etruria Antica 1, 1927, 109. Vgl. R. Enking, MDAI (R) 58, 1943, 59 ff.

anzukündigen, daß das aus dem Abgrund aufsteigende Verhängnis, nachdem es einmal zugeschlagen hat, einstweilen wieder in seinen unterirdischen Kerker zurückgedrängt werden kann — bis zu einem erneuten unberechenbaren Ausbruch ³⁾).

Man hat früher versucht, in der soeben beschriebenen merkwürdigen Darstellung ein etruskisches Amalgam aus den griechischen Sagen von der Hadesfahrt des Odysseus und dem Kerberosabenteuer des Herakles zu erkennen ⁴⁾. Aber die Schwierigkeiten einer solchen Deutung blieben erheblich und die Überzeugungskraft dementsprechend gering. Richtig ist daran sicherlich soviel, daß hier eine unmittelbare Konfrontation zwischen den Exponenten des Totenreiches und der Welt der Lebenden vorgeführt wird, wie sie auch die beiden griechischen Heroen gleichsam als Protagonisten des sterblichen Geschlechts der Erdenbewohner zu bestehen hatten. Doch dieses unheimliche und gefährliche Messen der Kräfte geschieht nicht anläßlich eines kühnen Vorstoßes Lebender zu den Vorhöfen der Unterwelt, sondern alle Einzelumstände der Szene sprechen umgekehrt für einen verderblichen und letztlich wohl auch unaufhaltbaren Angriff infernaler Gewalten auf den Daseinsbereich der Menschen. Seit Gustav Körte und Franz Messerschmidt ⁵⁾ bringt die Archäologie daher die besagten Abbildungen mit dem Bericht des älteren Plinius von der Heraufkunft des Olta bei Volsinii zu der Zeit des Königs Porsenna zusammen ⁶⁾, wobei der Name Olta oder Volta von dem Linguisten Emil Vetter zu *etr. veltha* 'Erde' gestellt und als 'Dämon der Erdtiefe' erklärt worden ist ⁷⁾. Zwar wurden Zweifel an der Zulässigkeit der vorgenommenen Kombination

3) R. Merkelbach, *Antaios* 12, 1971, 553.

4) Ducati, *RAL* 19, 167 ff. 180. 24, 549 f. *Etruria Antica* 1, 108 f.

5) Körte I *Rilievi delle Urne Etrusche* 3, 21. F. Messerschmidt, *MDAI* (R) 45, 1930, 172 Tf. 53.

6) *Plin. nat. hist.* 2, 140. F. Altheim, *Der Ursprung der Etrusker*, 1950, 66. *Geschichte der lateinischen Sprache*, 1951, 222. O. W. von Vacano, *Die Etrusker*, 1955, 222. 263.

7) E. Vetter, *Etruskische Wortdeutungen* 1, 1937, 65. *Glotta* 28, 1940, 203 f. — Zur sprachlichen Verbindung von Volta mit *etr. ule, vele, Veltha, Voltumna* W. Schulze, *Zur Geschichte der lateinischen Eigennamen* (Abh. Ges. d. Wiss. Göttingen NF 5, 5), 1904, 252. 260. 340. 381 Anm. 1. Ducati, *Etruria Antica* 1, 104. G. Devoto, *SE* 14, 1940, 279. A. Calderini, *Il Problema degli Influssi della Religione e del Culto degli Etruschi nella Vita Romana*, in: *Tyrrhenica. Saggi di Studi Etruschi*, 1957, 206. M. Pallottino, *Etruscologia*, 1963⁵, 243. A. J. Pfiffig, *Sprache* 14, 1968, 55. 148 f. Vgl. M. Lopes Vegna, *Problemi di Storia e di Topografia Etrusca*, 1967, 218. 248.

von bildlicher und literarischer Überlieferung geäußert⁸⁾; aber das bleibt in diesem Zusammenhang belanglos, denn es kommt weniger darauf an, wie das lykomorphe Ungeheuer hieß, als vielmehr darauf, daß es aus einem röhrenförmigen Hohlraum hervorstrebt, der an seinem oberen Ende eine brunnen- oder gefäßähnliche Mündung aufweist.

Solche tiefreichenden gemauerten Zisternen mit der Tendenz zu einer birnen- oder flaschenartigen Erweiterung nach unten sind bei Marzabotto, Bolsena, Chiusi und anderswo im Gebiet des alten Etrurien entdeckt worden⁹⁾. Das italienische Wort dafür ist *pozzo*; es geht auf lateinisch *puteus* 'Brunnen' zurück¹⁰⁾. Die Träger der italisch-etruskischen Mischkultur von Villanova setzten ihre Toten in nach dem Muster des *pozzo* gestalteten röhrenförmigen Grabanlagen bei¹¹⁾. O. W. von Vacano hat in seinem Etruskerbuch den *pozzo* als 'Schacht zur Unterwelt' bezeichnet und daran erinnert, daß das Märchen gelegentlich den Brunnen zum geheimnisvollen Durchgang vom Lebensbezirk der Menschen in ein unter der Erde verborgenes Feen- oder Geisterreich macht¹²⁾.

Auf den Grabfresken der Tomba Stackelberg von Corneto und der Tomba della Scimmia von Chiusi steht der chthonische Brunnenrand, das sogenannte *Puteal*¹³⁾, im Mittelpunkt musikalischer und tänzerischer Leichenspiele der etruskischen Jugend¹⁴⁾. Die zu Ehren des Hingeschiedenen zelebrierten Feiern fanden also gleichsam am Tor des Tartaros statt und dienten offenbar der Neutralisierung von dort ausgehender schädlicher, lebensgefährdender Einflüsse.

8) R. Enking, *RE*² IX A (1961), 847 f. Vgl. Anziani, *MAH* 30, 268.

9) E. Gabrici, *MA* 16, 1906, 184 ff. Abb. 10. L. Banti, *SE* 17, 1943, 200. A. Grenier, *Bologne Villanovienne et Étrusque*, 1912, 101 ff. von Vacano, *Die Etrusker* 219 ff.

10) W. Meyer-Lübke, *Romanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 1935³, 570 (nr. 6877).

11) J. Martha, *L'Art Étrusque*, 1889, 32 ff. u. Abb. 1. Grenier, *Bologne Villanovienne et Étrusque* 129 ff. Abb. 20. 21. H. Hencken, *Tarquini, Villanovans and Early Etruscans*, 1968, 19 ff. Abb. 11.

12) Zum Motiv des Brunnens als Eingang zur Unterwelt im Märchen M. Riem-schneider, *Symbolon* 3, 1962, 56 f. — Vgl. A. Christensen, *Persische Märchen*, 1958, 27.

13) Ducati, *RAL* 24, 546 ff.

14) F. Weege, *JDAI* 31, 1916, 105 ff. 134 ff. Abb. 15. 138 u. Beil. I Tf. VIII (mit verfehlter Deutung). A. Piganiol, *RHLR* NS. 6, 1920, 336 ff. H. Wagen-voord, *Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion*, 1956, 125.

Angesichts des eigentümlichen, bekanntermaßen besonders intensiven Verhältnisses der etruskischen Religion zur Totenwelt¹⁵⁾ kann derartiges nicht überraschen. Bemerkenswerter ist schon das Hinüberwirken des infernaln Schachtmodells auf römische Riten tellurischer Prägung, wenngleich wir dort nur noch Bruchstücken einer früh verdunkelten Tradition begegnen. Die Festusglossen sprechen von dem *fons manalis*, also dem 'Quell der Schattenseelen'; sie behaupten, er sei von den römischen Auguren *puteus perennis* 'nie versiegender Brunnen' genannt worden¹⁶⁾. Diese Auskunft akzentuiert das Moment des Herausströmens von Kräften elementarer Art an die Oberfläche, von segensreichen Kräften vielleicht, wie der des Wassers, oder aber von unheilbringenden, herkommend aus der andersartigen Wesenheit des Jenseitigen. Doch es gibt auch den umgekehrten Aspekt der Kommunikation: Bei Livius stürzt der Verräter Philumenos vom scheuenden Pferd herunter in einen offenen Brunnenschacht, ein Vorgang, der einerseits etwas zu tun hat mit der *praecipitatio*, dem Hinabstürzen von Verbrechern in das *Chasma*, zum anderen mit der Devotion durch den freiwilligen Sprung in den aufklaffenden Erdsplatt¹⁷⁾.

Im letzteren Falle geht es um das Überantworten von menschlichem Leben, von Blut und Vitalenergie an die Gottheit der Erde beziehungsweise an die opferheischenden Manes. Die Berner Vergilscholien wollen aber wissen, daß man *apud antiquissimos*, also im Frühstadium römisch-etruskischer Kultur, vereinzelt auch in einen sehr tiefen Röhrenschacht (*puteus altissimus*) von nur drei Ellen lichter Weite regelrecht hinabgestiegen sei¹⁸⁾, vermutlich doch zu keinem anderen Zweck als um eines engeren Kontaktes mit den Bewohnern der Tiefe teilhaftig zu werden. Cato Maior hat seine Kenntnisse über den römischen *Mundus*, eine gewölbte Erdgrube, deren Grund den Manen geweiht war, nach eigener Aussage von den Besuchern dieses düsteren Ortes (*qui intraverunt*). Zwar hören wir über den *Mundus* ansonsten allerlei Wirres, Widersprüchliches und Ungereimtes¹⁹⁾, und es ist bis

15) F. de Ruyt, AC 5, 1936, 139 ff. (oriental. Einfl.).

16) Festus p. 157 M. (146 L.). F. Bömer, ARW 33, 1936, 279 f. Wagenvoort, *Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion* 119.

17) Liv. 27, 16, 4. Vgl. Bömer, ARW 33, 280 (mit Belegstellen). Wagenvoort, *Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion* 112 f.

18) Schol. Verg. Bern. ecl. 3, 105. Bömer, ARW 33, 281.

19) Vgl. S. Weinstock, MDAI (R) 45, 1930, 111 ff. L. Deubner, H 68, 1933, 276 ff. Y. Hedlund, *Eranos* 31, 1933, 53 ff. J. Kroll, RE XVI 560 ff.

heute strittig, ob er mit dem 'Schacht zur Unterwelt' identisch ist ²⁰⁾ oder vielmehr ein der Göttin Ceres geheiligter subterranner Getreidesilo war ²¹⁾. Aber unabhängig von seiner tatsächlichen Funktion knüpfte sich an ihn — berechtigt oder nicht — die Erinnerung an eine zeitweilige, rituell fundierte Fühlungnahme der Lebenden mit dem Gegenreich des Todes; denn die auf Varro beruhende Definition des Mundus bei Macrobius sagt, er sei 'gleichsam die Tür zu den freudlosen Göttern des Drunten' (*deorum tristium atque inferum quasi ianua*), eine Tür, welche an drei für bestimmte Tätigkeiten zu nefasti erklärten Tagen des römischen Kalenders offenstand (*mundus patet*) ²²⁾, während man umgekehrt nur dann zum Kampf, zur Seefahrt oder zur Hochzeit sich anschicken durfte, wenn 'der Schlund des Pluton verschlossen war' (*occlusa Plutonis fauce*) ²³⁾.

Ein seltsames, paradox anmutendes Gemisch von scheuer Furcht und rätselhaftem Hingezogensein offenbart sich in dem religiösen Verhalten des Römers gegenüber der anderen, nächtlichen Seite der Welt. Und noch etwas wird bei dieser Gelegenheit ersichtlich: wie sich verschiedenartige, zum Teil schon metaphorisch verblaßte Anschauungen von der Form und der Beschaffenheit des ungeheuren Raumes im Innern der Erde überlagern oder nebeneinander hergehen. Die 'Tür zu den Inferi' aktiviert das Bild des Hauses, der weitläufigen Hallen und Paläste des Hadesherrschers, der geräumigen Herberge des Totenwirts. Der 'Schlund des Pluton' ruft dagegen zunächst die Assoziation an den Rachen eines reißenden und verschlingenden Tieres hervor, umso mehr als die antike Dämonologie nicht nur das etruskische Wolfsungetüm und den griechischen Kerberos kennt, sondern auch den Hades selbst mit der Wolfsskappe auf dem Haupt präsentiert ²⁴⁾.

Aber fauces kann, besonders bei den römischen Dichtern, auch den krater- oder höhlenförmigen Erdschlund als Eingang zum Orcus be-

20) Riemschneider, *Symbolon* 3, 46.

21) K. Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte*, 1960, 142 f. (*Ceris mundus*).

22) C. O. Thulin, *Die etruskische Disziplin* 3, 1909, 17. K. Latte, *RE IX*, 1542.

23) *Macr. sat.* 1, 16, 16 ff. Ducati, *Etruria Antica* 1, 100. Vgl. Wagenvoort, *Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion* 114 ff.

24) Ducati, *RAL* 19, 169 ff. 24, 540 ff. J. Bayet, *MEFR* 40, 1923, 57 ff. 62. L. Gernet, *Mélanges F. Cumont*, 1936, 201 f. F. Kretschmar, *Hundestammvater und Kerberos*, 1938, 212 ff. G. van Hoorn, *Mélanges Bijvanck* (Nederl. Kunsthist. Jaarboek 5), 1954, 141 ff. 148. Vgl. Lopes Vegna, *Problemi di Storia e di Topografia Etrusca* 307 Abb. 134 (Tomba dei Sette Camini, Orvieto). M. A. del Chiaro, *AJA* 74, 1970, 292 f. Tf. 73.

zeichnen, darüber hinaus dann schließlich jeden schmalen Durchlaß, der in eine dahinterliegende ausgedehntere Räumlichkeit führt²⁵⁾. Die fauces Orci oder Avernī bei Vergil, Valerius Flaccus und Silius Italicus bleiben demnach imaginativ ebenso in der Schwebe zwischen Höllenrachen, schlauchartigem Engpaß und flurähnlichem Vorraum wie der Ausdruck ostium Orci 'Mündung des Orcus' für den lapis manalis, den 'Stein der Manen'²⁶⁾, sich zwischen den Bedeutungen 'Ausfluß eines Gewässers' und 'Portal eines Gebäudes' bewegt.

Es erhebt sich nun die Frage, inwieweit die fließenden, meist gar nicht mehr bewußt realisierten Bildgedanken von einer spezifischen Gestalt oder Architektur der Unterwelt einen in mythisch-religiöser Hinsicht relevanten Hintergrund besitzen. Um sie zu beantworten, werden wir über den Rahmen der römischen Religion und Literatur hinausgreifen müssen; denn mit einiger Sicherheit ist anzunehmen, daß die phantasiearme, der Kreation von Mythen unfähige Mentalität der Römer diese Bildgedanken nicht hervorgebracht, sondern vorgefunden und aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach nicht gerade vertieft hat, sie vielmehr verkümmern ließ.

Das scheint sich unter anderem auch an dem Begriff Orcus zu bestätigen. Seit langem gibt es einen Streit darüber, ob bei diesem Wort die räumliche Konzeption eines Platzes der Abgeschiedenen oder die personale eines chthonischen Gottes primär und damit auch älter sei; es wurden beachtliche Anstrengungen gemacht, um mit Hilfe des gesamten literarischen Belegmaterials die jeweils verfochtene Ansicht als die richtige zu erweisen²⁷⁾. In Wahrheit gestattet aber die Summe der einschlägigen lateinischen Belegstellen gar keine definitive Entscheidung nach der einen oder anderen Seite hin²⁸⁾; denn die Mehrzahl von ihnen zeigt ein auffälliges Verschwimmen oder doch zumindest ein paralleles Nebeneinander beider Möglichkeiten²⁹⁾. Offensichtlich bestand bei den römischen Dichtern und Schriftstellern selbst

25) E. Norden, P. Vergilius Maro Aeneis Buch VI, 1957⁴, 212 f.

26) Fest. p. 128 M. Bömer, ARW 33, 275 f.

27) J. S. Speijer, Lanx Satura (Programm Gymnasium Amsterdam), 1886, 5 ff. W. W. Fowler, The Religious Experience of the Roman People, 1922, 391. Wagenvoort, Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion 102 ff. G. Shipp, Glotta 39, 1961, 154 ff. Vgl. W. Mackauer, RE XVIII (1939), 908 ff. J. Kroll, Gott und Hölle, 1932/1963, 349 Anm.

28) Vgl. G. Dumézil, La Religion Romaine Archaique, 1966, 362.

29) Mackauer, RE XVIII 911. 915 f. Wagenvoort, Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion 107.

— und zwar wohl von Anfang an — keine Klarheit und somit auch keine verbindliche Konvention mehr über den Bedeutungs- und Anschauungsgehalt des Wortes Orcus. Es ist jedoch gegenüber der verschiedentlich geäußerten Behauptung, der älteren römischen Literatur sei die lokale Bedeutung unbekannt ³⁰⁾, ausdrücklich festzuhalten, daß die *ianua Orci* bei Plautus (*Bacch.* 368), die *templa alta Orci* bei Ennius (*Androm.* fr. 12 V.) und der *thesaurus Orci* des Naevius-Epigramms (*Gell. Noct. Att.* 1, 24, 2) eine solche nicht zur zulassen, sondern geradezu nahelegen und insofern die anschauungsmäßigen Voraussetzungen hergeben für die *fauces Orci* Vergils, die *vastae lacunae Orci* des Lukrez (1, 115) und den *hiatus Orci* des Lucan (6, 712 ff) mit ihrer einhelligen Bezugnahme auf den Chasma-Charakter des Eintritts zur Unterwelt ³¹⁾.

Wo die literarische Beschreibung und Erklärung es an übereinstimmender, dezidierter Aussage fehlen läßt, wird der kritische Betrachter des Phänomens zwangsläufig auf den Namen und dessen möglicherweise aufschlußgebende Etymologie verwiesen. Dabei stellt sich heraus, daß es der modernen Sprachwissenschaft Schwierigkeiten bereitet hat, das Wort Orcus an eine bekannte indogermanische Wurzel anzuschließen. Davon abgesehen liefen alle diesbezüglichen Versuche — das gilt sowohl für Hirzels "Ορχος-Theorie als auch für Osthooffs und Günterts Zusammenstellung mit *arca*, *arx* und *arcere* ³²⁾ — interessanterweise auf die semantische Sinngebung des Einhegens, Bergens, Verschließens und Verwahrens hinaus und entsprachen damit im großen und ganzen den pseudoetymologischen Spekulationen der antiken Grammatiker ³³⁾. Bei eben diesen Grammatikern und Lexikalistern aber findet sich nun ein Anhaltspunkt, der aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach auf die richtige Spur führt: Die 'Etymologien' des Isidor von Sevilla (8, 11, 42) leiten Orcus sprachlich von dem gleichen Ursprung ab wie das im Lateinischen vorkommende Nomen *orca* 'Tonne, Faß',

30) Vgl. Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte* 156 Anm. 5. Shipp, *Glotta* 39, 154. 157.

31) Vgl. Kroll, *Gott und Hölle* 391 Anm. 1.

32) R. Hirzel, *Der Eid*, 1902, 149 ff. 153 ('Einheger'). Vgl. Th. Zielinski, *Philologus* 55, 1896, 509 Anm. 16. G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*, 1912², 310 u. Anm. 9. — H. Osthoff, *IF* 8, 1898, 54 ff. ('Verschließer, Verwahrer'). H. Güntert, *Kalypso*, 1919, 135 ff. Vgl. H. Petersson, *Glotta* 7, 1916, 320.

33) Mackauer, *RE* XVIII 909 ff. Vgl. G. Radke, *Die Götter Altitaliens*, 1965, 241.

und zwar sinngemäß mit der Begründung, der Orcus nehme ebenso die Toten auf, wie das orca genannte Gefäß Wasser aufnimmt ³⁴).

Man kann das natürlich zunächst als wertlose kombinatorische Spielerei abtun. Aber die Dinge bekommen ein anderes Gesicht, wenn man weiß, daß einerseits der römische Grammatiker Verrius Flaccus für Orcus die archaische Form Urcus bezeugt und daß andererseits zu orca die ebenfalls mit u anlautenden Substantiva urceus 'Krug' und urna-urcna 'Wassergefäß, Aschenurne' gehören ³⁵). Der gemeinsame Anlautwechsel von u zu o deutet auf eine Herkunft der gesamten Wortgruppe aus dem Etruskischen; und tatsächlich tritt dort das Element urc- bzw. urχ- nicht nur innerhalb des Lokal- und Gentinamenbereichs ³⁶), sondern — in dem Ritualdokument der sogenannten Agrimmer Mumienbinde — auch appellativbildend auf ³⁷). Allerdings war das Etruskische in diesem Falle lediglich Vermittler eines älteren mittelmeerischen Substrats ³⁸), welches im Griechischen durch ὕρχη, ὕρχη 'Tontopf' beziehungsweise ὕρχος 'Korb' vertreten ist ³⁹) und — wenn nicht alles täuscht — mit der generellen Bedeutung 'Gefäß' bereits aus den mykenischen Pylostafeln belegt werden kann ⁴⁰).

34) Für Verbindung von Orcus mit orca A. Vaniček, Etymologisches Wörterbuch der lateinischen Sprache, 1881, 25 f. F. Müller Izn, Altitalisches Wörterbuch, 1926, 306 (beide mit Bezug zu arcere).

35) Fest. p. 202 M. (= 222 L.). A. Walde-J. B. Hofmann, Lateinisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch 2, 1954, 220 f. Vgl. G. Goetz, Gnomon 8, 1932, 262 (zur Volksetymologie (Orcus-urgere).

36) G. Dennis, Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria 1, 1878, 204 Anm. 5. Schulze, Zur Geschichte der lateinischen Eigennamen 68. 364. 381. M. Pallottino, MA 36, 1931, 584. E. Vetter, Handbuch der italischen Dialekte 1, 1953, 323 (nr. 342a). J. Heurgon, Hommages M. Niedermann, 1956, 169 ff. 172.

37) M. Pallottino, Testimonia Linguae Etruscae, 1954, 14. M. Fowler-R. G. Wolfe, Materials for the Study of the Etruscan Language 1, 1965, 134, 2, 1965, 537. A. J. Pfiffig, Die etruskische Sprache, 1969, 269 ('Bauer'??; aber in der unmittelbaren Nachbarschaft von laive 'Ackerfeld' und hamφe 'Weideland' (I VI 3. 5) erscheint auch eine Bedeutung 'Wasserspender' = 'Brunnen', 'Quellgefäß' passend).

38) A. Ernout, BSL 30, 1929, 96. Ernout-Meillet, Dictionnaire Étymologique de la Langue Latine, 1932, 711.

39) H. Frisk, Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch 2, 1969, 822. 973. — Spirantischer Anlaut (Horus) und Aspiration der Gutturalis (Orchus) treten im Lateinischen gelegentlich wieder auf (Plaut. Epid. 176 [cod. A]. — CIL II 488. XII 5272. CLE 1829).

40) PY JN 829. L. R. Palmer, The Interpretation of Mycenaean Greek Texts, 1963, 281 ff. 283. M. S. Ruiperez, Minos 8, 1963, 37 ff. 45 f. J. Taillardat, Atti e Mem. 1. Congr. di Micenologia 1967, 2, 1968, 709 ff. 711. 712 A. 13.

Etruskisch-mediterraner Einfluß auf das römische Unterweltsbild ⁴¹⁾ erstreckte sich demnach bis hin zu bestimmten Einzelheiten der Terminologie. Die Bezeichnung *Mundus* für die Grube der Manen verdankt der römische Kult erwiesenermaßen eben dem gleichen Einfluß ⁴²⁾. Das aber bedeutet das Zusammenfallen von mythologischen, archäologischen und sprachlich-terminologischen Indizien für Heimat und Herkunftsrichtung der von uns hier betrachteten Unterweltskonzeption und für deren prinzipielles räumlich-figürliches Gepräge. Die religionsgeschichtlichen Konsequenzen aus dem damit gegebenen Sachverhalt hat als einziger bisher der niederländische Gelehrte Hendrik Wagenvoort gezogen, als er vor etwa 35 Jahren die an den Namen *Orcus* geknüpfte Anschauung von der Behausung der Schatten als einem überdimensionalen, unter der Erde befindlichen Gefäß zu erweisen suchte ⁴³⁾. Dabei deutete sich die dieser Anschauung zugrundeliegende funktionale Idee einstweilen nur umrißhaft an; ich will daher auf der Basis des bisher Ermittelten darangehen, drei Aspekte einer solchen Idee sichtbar zu machen.

Erstens: das Gefäß hat die Fähigkeit, zu schützen und zu bewahren; es ist ein Mittel der Konservierung, geeignet, Objekte, die einer Beeinträchtigung welcher Art auch immer entzogen werden sollen, aufzunehmen; es vermag sie zu bergen, notfalls auch zu verbergen. Der Bezug dieser Funktion zur Unterwelt wird begreiflich, wenn man sich die Beisetzungsweise frühetruskischer, zum Teil noch aus der Villanova-Zeit stammender Kanopen in den sogenannten *Tombe a ziro* oder *Tombe a dolio* ⁴⁴⁾ vor Augen hält. Ein brunnenförmiger Schacht aus gemauerten Steinen, also die Miniatur eines *pozzo* und zugleich ge-

41) Fowler, *Religious Experience of the Roman People* 391. Latte, *RE IX* 1592. Vgl. Wagenvoort, *Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion* 108.

42) F. Ribezzo, *RIGI* 12, 1928, 89. Vgl. Ernout, *BSL* 30, 107. A. J. Pfiffig, *Sprache* 8, 1962, 142 ff.

43) *Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion* 109 ff. — Die Kritik von Mackauer, *RE XVIII* 926 f. ist pedantisch und geht am Wesentlichen vorbei. — Heurgon, *Mélanges M. Niedermann* 173 wollte in *etr. Urc/g-(e)* einen Unterweltsdämon finden; doch wäre ein solche Gestalt, falls es sie überhaupt gegeben hat, wie im Lateinischen sekundär aus der Bereichsvorstellung entwickelt. Vgl. Merkelbach, *Antaios* 12, 553 (der etruskische Wolfsdämon kann *Orcus* benannt werden nach dem Faß-Gefängnis (*orca*), dem er entsteigt).

44) Martha, *L'Art Étrusque* 33 u. Anm. 3. 44. Grenier, *Bologne Étrusque et Villanovienne* 144 ff. 164 f. E. Fiumi, *SE* 29, 1961, 253 ff. Abb. 1a-c. 263 Abb. 5. J. M. C. Toynbee, *Death and Burial in the Roman World*, 1971, 15. Vgl. A. Soutou, *Ogam* 12, 1960, 1 A.

wissermaßen der verlängerte Hals des Grabgehäuses, führt hinab zu einem mit einer Felsplatte abgedeckten Pithos. Das große tönernen Faß bildet die Wohnung des Verstorbenen, sozusagen seinen privaten Orcus, der ihm nach Möglichkeit die gewohnte Umgebung erhalten soll: die bekleidete, manchmal mit den Gesichtszügen und Körperformen des Toten bemalte Helm- oder Gesichtsurne thront auf einem Sessel und hat allerlei Einrichtungsgegenstände und Gerätschaften, Speisen und Räucherwerk vorgesetzt bekommen⁴⁵⁾. So ausgestattet ist der Tote in den bewahrenden Schoß der Erde eingegangen; der Schutz des unterirdischen Gefäßes — im Großen wie im Kleinen — soll ihm die Fortexistenz in der Jenseitssphäre gewährleisten.

Zweitens: das Gefäß ist ein Behältnis, dienlich zur Aufnahme von Objekten, die man aus gewissen Gründen nicht restlos beseitigen kann, deren man sich aber entledigen möchte, entweder, weil man ihrer nicht mehr bedarf oder weil sie lästig, vielleicht sogar schädlich sind. Die römischen Antiquare und Glossographen⁴⁶⁾ haben einen ansonsten aus dem literarischen Sprachgebrauch völlig verschwundenen Spezialausdruck erhalten; er ist den Römern vermutlich wiederum — wie die von ihm gemeinte Sache — aus dem Etruskischen überkommen⁴⁷⁾; er lautet *favisae* und bezieht sich auf wassergefüllte, höhlenähnliche Zisternen, wie sie sich nach Varro und Servius Sulpicius auch auf dem Kapitol befunden haben sollen. Sie dienten der Priesterschaft als *thesauroi*, das heißt als Depots für alte, nicht mehr verwendete Götterbilder und andere unbrauchbar gewordene Kultrequisiten (*signa vetera et alia quaedam religiosa*), waren aber zugleich auch Speicher für alle möglichen Votivgaben⁴⁸⁾. Die Pozzi des Saturntempels und des Tempels der Vesta am Forum Romanum⁴⁹⁾, die Zisternen der etruskischen

45) F. Messerschmidt, MDAI (R) 43, 1928, 96. von Vacano, Die Etrusker 180 f. u. Abb. 78. Hencken, Tarquinia, Villanovians and Etruscans 685 (Ind.).

46) Gell. noct. Att. 2, 10, 1 ff. Paul. ex Fest. 88, 4. Non. 112, 29. T. Hackens, *Favisae*, in: *Études Etrusco-Italiques*, 1963, 71 ff. 75 f.

47) H. Jordan, Kritische Beiträge zur Geschichte der lateinischen Sprache, 1879, 81 f. F. Skutsch, Glotta 4, 1913, 189 Anm. 1. Ernout-Meillet, Dictionnaire Etymologique 221. Vgl. G. Devoto, Geschichte der Sprache Roms, 1968, 77. Hackens, *Favisae* 81 f.

48) Q. F. Maule-H. R. W. Smith, *Votive Religion at Caere: Prolegomena* (Univ. Calif. Publ. Class. Arch. 4), 1959. R. Bloch, REA 63, 1961, 196 ff. — Nicht zugänglich: M. Tabanelli, *Gli Ex-Voto Poliviscerali Etruschi e Romani*, 1962.

49) A. Colini, Boll. Comm. Arch. Comun. Roma 69, 1941, 86 ff. A. Bartoli, MAL 45, 1961, 11 ff. E. Gjerstad, *Early Rome* 3, 1960, 359 ff.

Heiligtümer von Norba und Manganello bei Caere⁵⁰), die Opferschalen- und Gabenreste im Mundus von Cosa oder in den großen Depotgefäßen von Gela und Vetulonia⁵¹) zeigen die Verbreitung dieser Praxis — mit gewissen örtlichen Variationen — über ganz Italien⁵²). Dabei hatte die Benutzung solcher tempeleigener Brunnenanlagen als *Rezeptacula* offenbar nicht nur praktische Gründe; sie hing auch mit dem Wunsch zusammen, Gegenstände und Instrumente des Kultus nachträglicher Profanierung zu entziehen und sie loszuwerden durch Ablage in *pozzi sacri*, die ihrerseits ja nichts anderes darstellten als Zugänge zu dem riesigen sakrosankten Behältnis des allesaufnehmenden chthonischen Gewölbes. Aber eben die gleichen Absichten und Erwägungen lassen sich auch auf die Versenkung und den Verschuß des Toten im Schacht und im Gefäß des Grabes übertragen: der Drang der Lebenden, sich keiner religiösen Verfehlung gegenüber dem verehrungswürdigen Verstorbenen schuldig zu machen, ihm jede verunglimpfende Störung von außen zu ersparen, verbindet sich mit dem nicht minder starken Drang, ihn fernzuhalten, das *Kontagium* einer Berührung mit ihm zu vermeiden, seine gespenstische Rückkehr zu verhindern⁵³).

Bestätigt wird die negative Seite des Strebens nach Deportation in eine gesonderte Sphäre durch die Verwendung brunnen- oder gefäßartiger unterirdischer Kavernen als Gewahrsam für Verbrecher. In der *Aulularia* (347.365) des Plautus sollen diebische Köche in einen puteus geworfen werden; das römische Tullianum, die Exekutionsstätte der Catilinarier (Sall. Cat. 55, 3) mag eine Ahnung von solchen Schachtverliesen vermitteln⁵⁴). Nach Auskunft des Hesychlexikons bezeichnete bei der griechischen Bevölkerung von Kypros das Wort *κέραμος* 'Tontopf' sowohl den großen mannshohen Pithos als auch das *δεσμωτήριον*, das Gefängnis; eine weitere Glosse führt unter dem Lemma *σιρός*, welches an sich den Getreidesilo als Sonderform eines

50) L. Savignoni-R. Mengarelli, NSA 1903, 238. R. Mengarelli, SE 9, 1935, 83 ff. 87 Tf. XV.

51) P. Orsi, MA 17, 1906, 585 ff. D. Levi, NSA 1926, 187.

52) Hackens, *Favisae* 88 ff. 90 f. 94. — G. G. Porro, *Atene e Roma* 18, 1915, 178 ff. 182 Abb. 9 (S. Vittoria di Serri). M. Napoli, PP 21, 1966, 191 ff. 222 u. Abb. 7 (Velia). E. Colonna di Paolo-G. Colonna, *Castel d'Asso (Le Necropoli Rupestri dell' Etruria Meridionale 1)* 1, 1970, 52 f. 59.

53) J. Wiesner, *Grab und Jenseits*, 1938, 166 f. Vgl. W. Fauth, KP 1, 1964, 874.

54) Thulin, *Die etruskische Disziplin* 3, 18. 22. Vgl. Kroll, RE XVI 561 f. E. Maass, RhM 74, 1925, 246.

θησαυρός meint, die beiden Interpretationen πίθος, also 'Vorratsfaß', eventuell für Getreide, und δεσμωτήρια 'Gefängnis' an ⁵⁵⁾). Die eigentümliche funktionale Verklammerung erklärt sich letzten Endes aus dem ursprünglichen Bemühen, den Delinquenten mitsamt dem aufgrund seines Vergehens ihm anhaftenden Miasma durch Eingabe in einen Pithos als Gefängniszelle völlig zu isolieren, ihn sozusagen aus der Welt zu schaffen, andererseits ihn, ohne sein Leben direkt anzutasten, als eine Art Opfergabe dem Vollzug von Sühne und Strafe durch die Inferi auszuliefern. So ist der Extremfall des 'Ganges zum Gefäß' als einer Form des Begräbnisses bei lebendigem Leibe, wie sie die hethitischen Gesetze für den aufsässigen Sklaven vorsahen ⁵⁶⁾, grundsätzlich vergleichbar mit dem Sturz zum Tode verurteilter Verbrecher in das attische Barathron.

Drittens und letztens: das Gefäß ist ein Reservoir, in dem 'Lebensmittel' im weitesten Umfang des Wortes gehortet und aus dem sie bei Bedarf entnommen werden, eine Quelle von Speise und Trank, ein Symbol des Vorrats oder gar des Überflusses, damit und darüber hinaus aber — unter dem Blickwinkel eines magisch-dämonisch orientierten Welterlebnisses — der Sitz von segensreichen oder destruktiven Kräften, die — unter Verschuß gehalten — gebändigt bleiben, ebenso leicht jedoch auch entweichen und ihre unkontrollierte Herrschaft über die Menschen ausüben können. Auf einem Fries der Tomba Leone zu Tarquinii umgeben Tänzer und Musikanten einen gewaltigen zweihenkligen Topf aus Lehm oder Metall, der auf dem Boden zwischen ihnen steht und mit Blättern bekränzt ist. Seine Funktion bleibt für uns im Zwielficht der beiden Möglichkeiten: Aufbewahrungsort der zu Asche gewordenen Reste des Dahingeschiedenen oder Weinbehälter als Symbol der Fülle im Rahmen des funeralen Festes ⁵⁷⁾. Ein Puteal im umbrisch-etruskischen Perugia trägt eine Weihinschrift an den unterweltlichen Mars ⁵⁸⁾, eine altitalische Gottheit also mit klar erkennbaren

55) K. Latte, Glotta 34, 1955, 200 ff. H. Frisk, Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch 1, 1959, 823. 2, 1967, 710. — Zu σίρος Maass, RhM 74, 246 f.

56) J. Friedrich, Die hethitischen Gesetze (DMOA 7), 1959, 76/77. 111 (A. NA DUGUTÚL pa-iz-zi). G. Neumann, Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kulturwissenschaft (Sonderheft 24), 1967, 34. J. Harmatta, Acta Ant. Hung. 16, 1968, 57 ff. (mit indischen Parallelen).

57) R. Bartoccini, Les Peintures Étrusques de Tarquinia, 1955, Tf. 3. Toynbee, Death and Burial in the Roman World 17.

58) CIL 1919. G. Hermansen, Studien über den italischen und den römischen Mars, 1940, 61 f. Vgl. K. Olzscha, SE 29, 1961, 481.

Beziehungen sowohl zu agrarischer Fruchtbarkeit als auch — im positiv-schützenden wie im negativ-vernichtenden Sinne — zu Krieg, Krankheit, Mißwachs und anderen epidemischen Heimsuchungen⁵⁹⁾.

Die latinische Cista von Praeneste führt nun diesen Mars in einer Situation vor, die mit geringfügigen Unterschieden auch auf zwei etruskischen Spiegeln von Bolsena und Chiusi begegnet⁶⁰⁾: der kindlich-jugendliche Gott wird — behelmt und bewaffnet — von der göttlichen Kurotrophos Minerva einem bauchigen Gefäß enthoben, aus dessen Hals Wellen sprudelnden Wassers hervorströmen. Der französische Gelehrte Jean Bayet sah in dem Vorgang die Emporkunft des Mars aus dem Pithos der Unterwelt⁶¹⁾, und die Anwesenheit des dreiköpfigen Kerberos beziehungsweise des etruskischen Todesdämons Leinth am Rande des Bildes scheint ihm recht zu geben. Man hat freilich seiner Sicht verschiedentlich widersprochen mit der Behauptung, der infantile Gott habe als Vegetationsgeist hier soeben durch Minerva-Athene eine rituelle Reinigung nach seiner Wiedergeburt oder aber ein redintegrierendes Verjüngungsbad in den kochenden Wasserfluten eines magischen Kessels erhalten⁶²⁾. Doch im Grunde schließen sich die beiden Auffassungen gar nicht unbedingt gegenseitig aus; denn einmal stellt ja der Puteuscharakter des *vas infernum* den Bezug zu dem aus der Erde hervorquellenden Wasser ohnehin her; zum anderen lassen die mediterranen Gefäßbestattungen im embryonalen Hocksitus⁶³⁾ den Gedanken der Erneuerung in Form einer Wie-

59) G. Devoto, *Tabulae Iguvinae*, 1937, 215. A. J. Pfiffig, *Religio Iguvina*, 1964, 39 Anm. 75. Wagenvoort, *Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion* 207 f. Radke, *Die Götter Altitaliens* 199 ff. M. D. Petruševski, *Acta Ant. Hung.* 15, 1967, 417 ff. I. Chirassi, *SMSR* 39, 1968, 237 ff.

60) R. Enking, *JDAI* 59/60, 1944/45, 111 ff. 116 ff. Abb. 2. Maule-Smith, *Votive Religion at Caere* 111 ff.

61) J. Bayet, *Hercle*, 1926, 255 ff. Vgl. Wagenvoort, *Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion* 213 ff.

62) Hermansen, *Studien über den italischen und den römischen Mars* 53 f. Wagenvoort, *Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion* 232. U. W. Scholz, *Studien zum altitalischen und altrömischen Marskult und Marsmythos*, 1970, 141 ff. Noch anders M. Riemschneider, *Acta Ant. Hung.* 8, 1960, 8 ff. — Vgl. zum magischen Kessel I. Chirassi, *Elementi di Culture Precereali nei Miti e Riti Greci (Incunabula Graeca* 30), 1968, 25 ff.

63) Ch. Blinkenberg, *Hades' Munding* (*Dansk Vidensk. Selsk.* 2, 5), 1919, 8 ff. Wiesner, *Grab und Jenseits* 47. 55. 60. 66 f. 89 f. 104. 109 ff. 114. 139. 142 f. 158. 179 ff. A. W. Persson, *The Religion of Greece in Prehistoric Times*, 1942, 9 ff. 12 ff. 38 u. Abb. 1. G. Thomson, *The Prehistoric Aegean*, 1949, 249 f. Vgl. Ch. Picard, *Les Religions Préhelléniques*, 1948, 257. M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte*

dergeburt auch des Sterblichen aus dem Höhlenschoß der Erdmutter bis zu einem gewissen Grade anklingen ⁶⁴).

Das Hervorkommen des gleichermaßen zum Segenspender wie zum Unheilbringer taugenden Mars aus der Verborgenheit der Tiefenbezirke kann man mit dem Ausbruch des etruskischen Wolfungeheuers aus dem Puteal zusammensehen unter dem gemeinsamen Vorzeichen der Entsendung dämonischer Schadensmächte aus der Gebundenheit des Orcus in das freie Wirkungsfeld der oberen Regionen. Man kann es — unter einem anderen Gesichtspunkt — aber auch verstehen als Befreiung einer lebensnotwendigen göttlichen Potenz aus einer naturgewollten Phase der Ohnmacht und Passivität zu erneuter Wirksamkeit im Rahmen eines gesetzmäßigen zeitlichen Rhythmus. Diese beiden Möglichkeiten der Interpretation gelten auch für die griechische Parallele zu der römisch-etruskischen Überlieferung vom zeitweiligen Verharren des ambivalenten, heil- und schadenstiftenden Gottes Mars im hypogäischen Gefäß und seiner schließlichen Befreiung: Homers *Ilias* bringt die bruchstückhafte Reminiszenz an die Fesselung des Ares durch die Erdsöhne Otos und Ephialtes ⁶⁵) sowie seinen dreizehnonatigen Aufenthalt in einem bronzenen Keramos (χαλκῆν ἐν κεράμῳ), einem undurchdringlichen Gefängnis, aus dem ihn erst die Kunst des Totengeleiters Hermes, des Wanderers zwischen Ober- und Unterwelt, zu erlösen vermochte ⁶⁶).

Nach den B-Scholien zu der *Ilias*-stelle war die vorübergehende Bindung des Ares von Aphrodite veranlaßt worden, weil er den Adonis getötet hatte ⁶⁷). Der Antagonismus des lebengebenden und des leben-

der griechischen Religion 1, 1955², 475. D. C. Kurtz-J. Boardman, *Greek Burial Customs*, 1971, 55. 71. 175. 177. 179. 185. 308.

64) Wiesner, *Grab und Jenseits* 218. J. Przyluski, *La Grande Déesse*, 1950, 122 ff. E. Neumann, *Die Große Mutter*, 1957, 160 f. Vgl. M. Riemschneider, *Augengott und Heilige Hochzeit*, 1953, 101. 112 f. 126 ff. G. Fink, *Pandora und Epimetheus*, 1959, 24 (mit Belegen und Parallelen).

65) Die Namen Otos ὄτος 'Ohreule' und Ephialtes ἐφιάλτης 'Nachtmahr, Alp' deuten auf nächtliche Plagegeister. Vgl. Harmatta, *Acta Ant. Hung.* 16, 63. — Der Name der Aloadenmutter Iphimedeia ist ein Appellativ der Erdgöttin. Vgl. Fink, *Pandora und Epimetheus* 26 f. M. Gérard-Rousseau, *Les Mentions Religieuses dans les Tablettes Myceniennes*, 1968, 116 ff.

66) Il. 5, 385 ff. H. J. Rose, *Griechische Mythologie*, 1955, 60. G. von Lücken, *Wiss. Ztschr. Un. Rostock* 12, 1963, 261. Vgl. M. Delcourt, *Pyrrhos et Pyrrha*, 1965, 72 f. 92. Merkelbach, *Antaios* 12, 552 f.

67) Schol. B Il. 5, 385. W. Kullmann, *Das Wirken der Götter in der Ilias*, 1956, 12 f.

raubenden Prinzips ist demnach einmal durch die abwechselnde oberweltliche Gegenwart und unterweltliche Latenz des dämonischen Paares Adonis-Ares im Bannkreis der Fruchtbarkeitsgöttin ansichtig gemacht worden. Die Sage berichtet ja von Adonis, Aphrodite habe ihn einst in einem Kasten an Persephone, die Herrin des Totenreichs, übergeben müssen⁶⁸). Daneben aber war für Ares ein den erwähnten hethitischen Gesetzesbestimmungen homologer Modus der Bestrafung und Depotenzierung von Schadensmächten durch Einschluß in das subterrane Topfverlies vorausgesetzt⁶⁹).

Die Geschichte vom Geist im Gefäß ist so alt und so weitverbreitet wie nur irgendeines der weltweiten Märchenmotive⁷⁰) und steht keineswegs immer von vornherein im Zusammenhang mit hypochthonischen Vorstellungen. Aber die orientalische Tradition enthüllt von den magischen Dokumenten sumerisch-akkadischer Frühzeit⁷¹) über die Sacharja-Vision des Alten Testaments von der 'Gottlosigkeit' im bleiernen Kornfaß⁷²), über die vielfältigen Varianten der Salomonsage⁷³) bis zu den aramäischen Zauberschalen⁷⁴) als Ausgangsbasis solcher Erzählungen die Praxis apotropäischer Bannung und Beschwörung von unheilbringende Kräften mit sehr realer Wirkungsmächtigkeit; und die von ritueller Magie getränkten hethitischen Mythen sagen uns ganz eindeutig, daß die Bronzeessel mit ihren Deckeln aus Blei und ihren Riegeln aus Eisen, in die allerlei schlimme Dinge wie 'Blutvergießen',

68) Von Lücken, *Wiss. Ztschr. Un. Rostock* 12, 260. Vgl. W. Fauth, *KP* 1, 1964, 70.

69) Harmatta, *Acta Ant. Hung.* 16, 61 ff. 63. 64 f. (mit Hinweis auf eine mögliche Identifikation des Ares mit dem hethitisch-luwischen Pestgott Jarri).

70) J. Bolte-G. Polivka, *Anmerkungen zu den Kinder- und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm* 2, 1915, 414 f. (nr. 99). L. Radermacher, *Sitz. Ber. Ak. d. Wiss. Wien Ph. Hist. Kl.* 213, 1, 1933, 181. S. Thompson, *Motif Index of Folk Literature* 2, 1933, 334 (nr. D 2177, 1-3). 5, 1935, 213 (nr. R 189).

71) J. A. Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts*, 1913, 75 ff. I. Trecsenyi-Waldapfel, *Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte*, 1966, 71.

72) Sach. 4-11. H. Gunkel, *Das Märchen im Alten Testament*, 1917, 86. A. Jirku, *Altorientalischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament*, 1923, 218. Trecsenyi-Waldapfel, *Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte* 71 f. Vgl. H. A. Hoffner, *JNES* 27, 1968, 66. Harmatta, *Acta Ant. Hung.* 16, 61 f.

73) G. Salzberger, *Die Salomonsage in der semitischen Literatur*, 1907, 98 f. Vgl. A. Wirth, *Danae in den christlichen Legenden*, 1892, 44 Anm. 5. Trecsenyi-Waldapfel, *Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte* 72.

74) Jirku, *Altorientalischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament* 114. FF 28, 1954, 57. M. Lidzbarski, *Oriental. Studien Th. Noeldeke* 1, 1906, 538 Anm. 3. Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts* 40 f. 43. 127 ff. Tf. IV.

‘Kummer’, ‘Tränen’, ‘Sorge’ und ‘Krankheit’ hineingelegt werden sollen, um möglichst nie wieder daraus zu entweichen, in der tiefen See oder in der dunklen Unterwelt aufgestellt sind, und weiterhin, daß in diese möglichst weit von menschlicher Siedlung entfernten hermetisch verschlossenen Behälter auch die ‘Wut’ und der ‘Groll’ des Vegetationsgottes Telipinu und der Muttergöttin Hannahanna für immer verschwinden sollen⁷⁵). Die dämonisierende Verselbständigung subjektiver Emotionen und objektiver Leiden oder Beschwerden sucht folgerichtig nach Möglichkeiten ihrer Elimination in ein menschenfernes Reservat, eine undurchdringliche Klausur und errichtet mit der Überweisung dieser Plagegeister an die loca deserta des Meeres und der Erdtiefe zugleich auch die imaginativen Voraussetzungen für deren Heimat- und Ursprungsbereich. Von dem Kessel der Plagen im Abgrund bis zum Abyssos als bodenlosem Gefäß der übel braucht die Phantasie nur einen Schritt. Hesiods ‘Theogonie’ läßt den Tartaros von einer ehernen Wand umgeben und seinen Hals dreifach von finsterner Nacht umgossen sein, und man hat längst erkannt, wie stark sich diese Ausmalung des unentrinnbaren Kerkers der gestürzten Titanen dem Unterweltsmodell des Metallfasses mit halsartiger Verengung in seinem oberen Teil nähert⁷⁶). Der englische Hesiod-Forscher Peter Walcot hat von dem faßähnlichen Gebilde des Tartaros-Gefängnisses in der ‘Theogonie’ Verbindungslinien sowohl zu dem ehernen Keros der homerischen Ares-Episode als auch zu dem magischen Pithos der Pandora in Hesiods ‘Werken und Tagen’ gezogen und vermutet, in diesem letztgenannten ‘unzerbrechlichen Gehäuse’ (ἐν ἀρρήκτοις δόμοις) dämonischer Wesen und Potenzen könnten die Wände ebenfalls aus Metall gedacht gewesen sein⁷⁷). Leider verrät uns der Dichter nicht, wo sich der seltsame Gegenstand befunden hat und wessen Eigentum er war⁷⁸); jedenfalls aber stammte er nicht aus

75) E. Laroche, RHA 77, 1965, 97. Hoffner, JNES 27, 65 f. u. Anm. 33. 34. H. Otten-W. von Soden, Das akkadisch-hethitische Vokabular KBo I 44 + KBo XIII 1 (SBoT 7), 1968, 30 f. Harmatta, Acta Ant. Hung. 16, 62 f.

76) Hesiod. theog. 726 ff. Vgl. Hom. Il. 8, 13 ff. O. Roszbach, BPhW 37, 1917, 1501 ff. W. Aly, Hesiods Theogonie, 1913, 47. Blinkenberg, Hades' Munding 17 f. Wagenvoort, Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion 128 f. Historia Mundi 3, 1954, 493. Vgl. M. C. Stokes, Phronesis 7, 1962, 9. 15. M. L. West, Hesiod Theogony, 1966, 360.

77) Hesiod. op. 94 ff. P. Walcot, Hesiod and the Near East, 1966, 61.

78) Vermutungen dazu bei J. E. Harrison, JHS 20, 1900, 103. A. Severyns, NClio 5, 1953, 148 ff. F. Krafft, Vergleichende Untersuchungen zu Homer und Hesiod (Hypomnemata 6), 1963, 108.

dem Himmel des Zeus, sondern gehörte wie das aus Erde geschaffene Weib dem tellurischen Bereich an. Walcot und andere haben meines Erachtens zu Recht betont, daß die beiden $\pi\acute{\iota}\theta\omicron\iota$ der guten und der üblen Dinge im Hause des Olym (Il. 24, 527 ff.) eben keine expansiven dämonischen Kräfte beherbergen, sondern als offene Vorratsgefäße vorzustellen sind, aus denen der Vater der Götter und Menschen Angenehmes und Schlimmes wohlgemischt und abgewogen zu-teilt ⁷⁹⁾ wie der mykenische Basileus den Bewohnern seines Palastes die Speiserationen ⁸⁰⁾. Sie gleichen somit jenen riesigen tönernen Tonnen, wie sie die Magazine in den weitläufigen Palästen von Knossos und Troja-Hissarlik beherbergten ⁸¹⁾. Allerdings bezeugen etwa die Vasenbilder vom Aufenthalt des Herakles bei dem Kentauren Pholos und Troja-Hissarlik beherbergten ⁸¹⁾. Allerdings bezeugen etwa die übermannshohen $\pi\acute{\iota}\theta\omicron\iota$ gelegentlich bis zum Hals in den gewachsenen Boden eingelassen waren und ebenso der Lagerung von Wein wie dem Versteck oder auch der Verwahrung von Menschen dienen konnten ⁸²⁾. Und da das Kentauren- und das Kerberosabenteuer zumindest mittelbar in Berührung mit der infernaln Region stehen ⁸³⁾, mag von daher ein gewisses Licht fallen auf den Situs, die Form und die Funktion des Fasses der Pandora, das allem Anschein nach mit den verriegelten Erzkeßeln der hethitischen Mythen nicht minder verwandt war als mit den kellerartig ins Erdreich versenkten Korn-, Öl- und Weinbehältern des griechischen Grundbesitzers. Denn ungeachtet aller interpretatorischen Schwierigkeiten des so sehr umstrittenen Textabschnitts der hesiodeischen 'Erga' ⁸⁴⁾ ergibt sich eben aus der offenkundigen

79) Zur Rolle des Kornvorratgefäßes ($\Delta\Upsilon\Gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho\sigma\iota$) im Kult des kleinasiatischen Wettergottes H. G. Güterbock, Festschrift J. Friedrich, 1959, 208. Harmatta, Acta Ant. Hung. 16, 63.

80) P. Walcot, Hermes 89, 1961, 250 (gegen Ch. Picard, Acropole 7, 1932, 39 ff.).

81) W. Dörpfeld, Troja und Ilion, 1902, 184 ff. (u. Beil. 27). 192. Blinkenberg, Hades' Munding 12 f. Abb. 13. Walcot, H 89, 250.

82) Il. 9, 469. Fink, Pandora und Epimetheus 27. Vgl. Harrison, JHS 20, 100. Trencsenyi-Waldapfel, Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte 58. — E. Gerhard, Ausgewählte Vasenbilder 2, 1843, 46 f. Tf. XCVIII. Blinkenberg, Hades' Munding 20 ff., 22 f. Abb. 9.

83) Bayet, MEFR, 40, 21 ff.

84) A. S. F. Gow, Essays and Studies W. Ridgeway, 1913, 99 ff. O. Lendle, Die Pandorasage bei Hesiod, 1957. Fink, Pandora und Epimetheus 5 ff. G. Broccia, PP 9, 1954, 118 ff. 13, 1958, 296 ff. Trencsenyi-Waldapfel, Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte 59 ff.

Doppeldeutigkeit der Aussage über den Inhalt des Pandora-Gefäßes dessen zweifache Kapazität als Sammelplatz und Ausgangsort gespenstisch umherflatternder Plagegeister, freigesetzt durch das unbeachtete Heben des Deckels von einem magisch abgesicherten, die Widerwärtigkeiten des Lebens unter Kontrolle haltenden Gewahr-sam ⁸⁵⁾, und als Speicher von Lebensgütern auch immaterieller Art ⁸⁶⁾, in diesem Falle der Hoffnung, der ungewissen, aber doch unentbehrlichen Wegbereiterin des von Mühen und Beschwerden geschmälernten menschlichen Bios, gehegt im sicheren *θησαυρός* des Vorratsfasses ⁸⁷⁾.

Pandora, die 'Allschenkende', war anfänglich eine Erscheinungsform der gabenausteilenden Erdgöttin ⁸⁸⁾. Das haben zu Beginn dieses Jahrhunderts bereits Jane Harrison und Carl Robert anhand griechischer Vasenbilder nachgewiesen ⁸⁹⁾, und ihre Erkenntnisse sind in letzter Zeit von dem ungarischen Religionshistoriker Trencsenyi-Waldapfel vertieft worden, indem er die Verwandtschaft der die Krone die Tierherrin tragenden hesiodeischen Pandora mit der kretisch-kleinasiatischen Erd- und Muttergottheit vom Typ der Rhea-Kybele aufgedeckt hat ⁹⁰⁾, der Bewohnerin trichter- oder gefäßähnlicher Gebirgshöhlen ⁹¹⁾. Die Geschenke der Erde an ihre Kinder sind vielfältig; Erfreuliches und Bedrückendes, Segensreiches und Verderbliches wechseln miteinander. Ge Pandora ist die freundliche Mutter, Erhalterin des Lebens, aber die orphischen Argonautika kennen auch die schreckliche, der Gespensterherrin Hekate nahestehende Pandora, deren Standbild aus Eisen war ⁹²⁾. Nicht anders war die aus Lehm gemachte Urfrau der 'Theogonie' ein *καλὸν κακόν* (v. 570 ff. 585), ein Gemisch aus ange-

85) Walcot, H 89, 251.

86) Vgl. Harmatta, Acta Ant. Hung. 16, 63.

87) L. Séchan, Bull. Ass. Budé 23, 1929, 3 ff. 16. Vgl. Trencsenyi-Waldapfel, Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte 74. — Zur Überschneidung der beiden Linien A. Lesky, WS 55, 1937, 21. Geschichte der griechischen Literatur, 1957/58, 95.

88) Vgl. U. Pestalozza, Acme 5, 1952, 548 ff. 550 f. Fink, Pandora und Epimetheus 13.

89) Harrison, JHS 20, 99 ff. 105 f. C. Robert, Hermes 49, 1914, 17 ff.

90) Trencsenyi-Waldapfel, Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte 49 ff. 55 ff. Vgl. T. B. L. Webster, From Mycenae to Homer, 1958, 45. W. Burkert, Gnomon 41, 1969, 115.

91) Zur etymol. Beziehung von Kubaba und +ku(m)b/p- 'Gefäß' W. Fauth, KP 3, 1969, 383 f. Vgl. Fink, Pandora und Epimetheus 25.

92) Orph. Arg. 974 ff. Fink, Pandora und Epimetheus 112 f. W. Pötscher, KP 4, 1972, 453.

nehmen und unerfreulichen Eigenschaften, insofern gleichsam ein Ebenbild der weiblichen Erde, ursprünglich daher wohl deren Geschöpf und nicht das des Hephaistos, bei Hesiod in mehrfacher Hinsicht, darunter auch namentlich mit ihrer Erzeugerin durcheinandergebracht⁹³). Die Vasenbilder künden nun davon, wie Pandora selbst durch die magischen Hammerschläge von Naturdämonen geweckt, mit der Krone auf dem Haupt dem tellurischen Chasma entsteigt und mit erhobenen Armen das Licht des Tages begrüßt⁹⁴). Es muß also eine Mythenversion von der 'Gabenbringerin' als Sondergestalt der Παμμήτωρ existiert haben, einer Gestalt, welche gleich der Kore-Persephone eine Spanne des Jahres im Versteck des hypochthonischen Reiches gefangen war und wieder zum Vorschein kam, nachdem die Hämmer der Satyrn oder anderer Repräsentanten neu erwachender Vegetationskraft die Zelle ihres unterirdischen Pithos aufgebrochen hatten⁹⁵).

Die innere Verflechtung von Befreiung und Aufstieg der Erdgeister und dem Austeilen vegetativer Fülle wird aus der Union von Faßöffnung und Totenbesuchsfest bei den attischen Anthesterien ersichtlich⁹⁶). Zwar sind nicht, wie Harrison und Gruppe wollten, die Pithoigien des ersten Tages mit dem Aufschließen des Orcus der Schatten identisch⁹⁷), sondern symbolisieren das Ausschütten der Erträge aus den Erntegefäßen des Weinspenders Dionysos und der fruchtebringenden Erde; aber wenn bereits der zweite Tag, das Kannenfest, überschattet war von der Ankunft der ψυχαι und der dritte, der Tag der Töpfe, ganz im Zeichen ihrer Bewirtung mit allerlei gekochten Früchten des Feldes und Gartens stand, dann zeigt sich daran die unaufhebbare Wechselbeziehung von Geben und Nehmen, von immer neuem Ausströmen der Nahrung aus dem chthonischen Reservoir der Natur und immer wiederkehrender Forderung der Ineri nach dem gebührenden Anteil an der Gesamtheit des eingebrachten Vor-

93) Robert, *Hermes* 49, 35 f. Vgl. M. Guarducci, *SMSR* 3, 1927, 27. Fink, *Pandora und Epimetheus* 10 ff. 13 f.

94) Harrison, *JHS* 20, 106. Robert, *Hermes* 49, 17. H. Metzger, *Recherches sur l'Imagerie Athenienne*, 1965, 11 ff.

95) Vgl. Guarducci, *SMSR* 3, 22 ff. MA 33, 1929, 8 ff.

96) Vgl. L. Deubner, *Attische Feste*, 1932/1962, 93 ff. 148 ff. W. Fauth, *KP* 1, 1964, 372 f. (Lit.). *WS NF.* 7, 1973, 60 f.

97) Harrison, *JHS* 20, 101 ff. Robert, *Hermes* 49, 31 f. O. Gruppe, *Burs.* 186, 1921, 247. Blinkenberg, *Hades' Munding* 15 f. — Kritik bei Deubner, *Attische Feste* 95. U. Bianchi, *Paideuma* 7, 1959/61, 418 ff.

rats⁹⁸). Die berühmte Jenaer Lekythos illustriert in idealer Weise diese notwendige Korrelation: Hermes Psychopompos läßt aus einem gewaltigen, mit seinem unteren Teil in den Tumulus eingesenkten Pithos die geflügelten Schattenseelen zwischen den beiden Dimensionen auf- und niederschweben⁹⁹); eben derselbe Pithos aber besitzt zwangsläufig keinen Boden¹⁰⁰) und ist nichts anderes als das obere Ende einer Opferröhre, durch welche die nährenden Spenden der Lebenden zu der hypogäischen Höhle des Grabes abwärtsrinnen und so den geforderten Tribut vom materiellen Bios an die Unterwelt zurückgeben¹⁰¹). Der Kreis der Betrachtung schließt sich, wenn wir — nach Rom zurückblickend — feststellen, daß vom Kollegium der Arvalbrüder nach vorgeschriebenem Ritus zu gesetzten Fristen Töpfe mit Brei in die Tempelschlucht hinabgerollt wurden 'zur Speise für die Mutter der Laren' (*cena Matri Larum*)¹⁰²). Die Larenmutter aber hieß bei den Römern *Mania*, war also Herrin der *Manes*¹⁰³), der Totenschwärme in der Tiefe des Orcus, und erhielt stellvertretend für ihre Schar mit der Opfermahlzeit des gekochten Breigerichts (*puls*, griech. *πέλανος*)¹⁰⁴) jene positiven Energien regenerativer und fekundativer Art zugeführt, die durch den Akt des Erhitzens und Siedens im magisch-kultischen Gefäß von den Besitzern des Feuers, den Teilhabern am Tageslicht und an der Sonnenwärme für die darbenden Bewohner der Finsternis zubereitet wurden¹⁰⁵).

98) Vgl. A. Dieterich, ARW 11, 1908, 172.

99) Blinkenberg, Hades' Munding 13 f. Abb. 6. Wagenvoort, Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion 125 f. H. V. Herrmann, Omphalos (Orbis Antiquus 13), 1959, 55 f. Tf. 5, 1.

100) Zum hethitischen Gegenstück des Kultgefäßes mit abgeschnittenem Boden (kattakurant-) Neumann, Innsbrucker Beiträge 34. Vgl. M. Riemschneider, Die Welt der Hethiter, 1954³, Tf. 50. 51.

101) L. Deubner, JDAI 42, 1927, 172 ff. Abb. 1. A. Furtwängler, ARW 8, 1905, 191. Blinkenberg, Hades' Munding 17 Abb. 7. 18 Abb. 8. Hermann, Omphalos 54 ff. Abb. 4. Fink, Pandora und Epimetheus 20 f. 23 f. — Zu den römisch-italischen Parallelen Toynbee, Death and Burial in the Roman World 37. 41. 51 f. 101 Tf. 18. 19.

102) C. Henzen, Acta Fratrum Arvalium, 1874, 26. 27. S. Eitrem, Hermes und die Toten, 1909, 57 Anm. 1 (mit Vergleich der Chytren). L. Ross Taylor, AJA 29, 1925, 299 ff. Wagenvoort, Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion 113 f. Chirassi, SMSR 39, 230.

103) Varro, de ling. Lat. 9, 61. Paul. ex. Fest. 114, 19. 115, 17 f. L. W. F. Otto, Arch. f. lat. Lexikogr. 15, 1908, 113 ff. Radke, Die Götter Altitaliens 198. Chirassi, SMSR 39, 231.

104) O. Benndorf, Wiener Eranos, 1893, 378. Chirassi, SMSR 39, 229.

105) Chirassi, Elementi di Culture Precereali 27.

Das Bild des Gefäßes in seiner Identität mit den *loca inferna* oder in seiner Beziehung zu ihnen wird von kultgebundener Sprache, Mythologie und märchenhafter Erzählung in räumlich und zeitlich relativ großer Verbreitung festgehalten; es ist dabei oft schon losgelöst von seinem religionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund, gleichwohl aber noch partiell aussagekräftig hinsichtlich der von uns beobachteten Vielfalt möglicher Funktionen. Erinnert sei an die cumäische Sibylle, zur winzigen Mumie geschrumpft, in der Flasche oder im runden Eisenkäfig als lebender Leichnam konserviert¹⁰⁶), an Eirene, von Polemos in eine tiefe Höhle (ἄντρον βαθύ) gesperrt und mit Steinen zugedeckt, von Hermes mit Hilfe der Bauern ans Licht gezogen¹⁰⁷), an das hethitische 'Fest des Pithos-Ausschüttens und -Öffnens' (EZEN DUGḥarši suhhawas hesuwas), das kleinasiatische Gegenstück zu den attischen Pithoigien¹⁰⁸). Der Krug mit den Quellströmen auf babylonischen Siegeln¹⁰⁹ gehört letztlich ebenso hierher wie die Urne aus Kristall, in der Psyche der Venus Wasser aus dem Fluß der Unterwelt bringen muß¹¹⁰), oder das bodenlose Faß der Danaiden, der mythische Prototyp eines unzählige Libationen fassenden sepulkralen Opferschlundes¹¹¹). In der Johannesapokalypse wird der 'Brunnen des Abgrunds' (φρέαρ τοῦ ἀβύσσου) von einem Engel des Gerichts aufgetan, um finsternen Rauch und Heuschreckenschwärme über die Erde sich ausbreiten zu lassen¹¹²), während in der vierten Hermas-Vision das Höllenungeheuer selbst ausgemalt wird mit einem Kopf, der einer riesigen enghalsigen und dickbauchigen Flasche gleisicht¹¹³). Analog zu diesem Bild begegnet in den italienischen Märchen die Gestalt der menschenfressenden Unholdin Orca¹¹⁴), einer weiblichen Varian-

106) Petr. Sat. 48. Ampel. 8, 16. C. Bonner, *Quantulacumque*. Studies pres. to Kirsop Lake, 1937, 1 ff. P. Veyne, *Hommages J. Bayet*, 1964, 718 ff. 720.

107) Aristoph, pax 221 ff.

108) Neumann, *Innsbrucker Beiträge* 34.

109) E. Douglas van Buren, *The Flowing Vase and the God with Streams*, 1933, 11 ff. Vgl. W. Fauth, *Hippolytos und Phaidra II*, 1960, 448 f.

110) Apul. met. 6, 13, 38. D. u. E. Panofsky, *Pandora's Box*, 1956, 18.

111) Harrison, *JHS* 20, 110 f. Blinkenberg, *Hades' Munding* 20.

112) Apocal. 9, 1 ff. F. Boll, *Aus der Offenbarung Johannis*, 1914, 33. 75. Blinkenberg, *Hades' Munding* 23 f. H. L. Strack-P. Billerbeck, *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch* 3, 1926, 809. 4, 1928, 1089. E. Peterson, *VC* 8, 1954, 64.

113) *Visio Hermae* 4, 1, 3. Peterson, *VC* 8, 59 f.

114) D. Comparetti, *Novelline Popolari Italiane*, 1875, 103 (nr. XXV). W. Keller-L. Rüdiger, *Italianische Märchen*, 1950, 307 ff. 385. Vgl. P. Rajna, *Le Fonti dell'Orlando Furioso*, 1900, 198 f 217 ff.

te des Orcus also, namensidentisch mit dem 'großen Faß' und demnach offenbar die Personifikation des dämonisierten allesverschlingenden Erdschoßes.

Jedes dieser beliebig aneinandergereihten, zum Teil recht disparat anmutenden Beispiele würde eine genauere Einzeluntersuchung bezüglich seines ursprünglichen, spezifischen Vorstellungsgehalts rechtfertigen. Wir begnügen uns hier damit zu konstatieren, daß sie sich ausnahmslos in die Skala wechselnder Bedeutungen des chthonischen Gefäßes einordnen lassen, wie sie sich aus dem literarischen und archäologischen Belegmaterial des römisch-etruskischen Kulturkreises ergeben hat. Danach bildet es sowohl die geheime Schatzkammer materieller Güter als auch den Hort untergründiger immaterieller Energien; es ist ein Brunnen natürlicher Fruchtbarkeit, daher die Ursprungszelle jeglicher Art agrestischen und animalischen Gedeihens ¹¹⁵), aber auch zugleich unersättlicher, immer neue Opfer an Leben und Lebenskraft verlangender Höllenschlund; als Seelenherberge von nie zu erschöpfender Aufnahmefähigkeit ist es Wohnstatt der Toten und damit magisch separierendes Gehege ihres furchterregenden Andersseins, doch wird es in dieser Eigenschaft auch umgedacht zum Sitz nächtlicher Schrecken, zum Herd aller nur erdenklichen Heimsuchungen und damit zu einer unergründlichen und nicht zu verstopfenden Quelle der Beängstigung und Irritation. Alles in allem zeigt es sich als ein Symbol der Erdgebundenheit des Menschen, das heißt einerseits seiner Teilhabe an den Geschenken der Tellus, andererseits der elementaren Unsicherheit und Gefährdung seiner leiblichen und seelischen Existenz.

HECATE: GREEK OR "ANATOLIAN" ?

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With the decipherment of Linear B came the surprising discovery that the nomenclature of many important deities of classical Greece could be traced back into the Bronze Age. The appearance of Dionysus' name, for example, on tablets from Pylos helps to confirm Guthrie's suggestion that belief in a late "intrusion" of Dionysiac ritual "was probably inherent in the ritual and comes into the myths primarily from that source and only secondarily, if at all, from the fact of historical opposition to his cult in Greece" ¹). New evidence and the progress of research undoubtedly hold new surprises in store ²). This paper proposes that another deity of supposed non-Greek origins, the goddess Hecate, may actually have as much right to an Hellenic pedigree as the other Olympians.

The weight of scholarly opinion now favors an "Anatolian" (Carian) origin for the cult of Hecate. The argument is based on two observations:

- 1) Personal names formed from *hekat-*, like that of Hekataios the geographer or that of Hekatomnus, who gave his name to the dynasty of Maussolus, occur primarily in Caria during the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. ³).
- 2) There is a temple of Hecate at Lagina in Caria where the goddess was worshipped as *sōteira*, *megistē*, and *epiphanestatē*; her exalted rank and function here are unmatched in cults of Hecate else-

1) Pylos Xa 102 and Xb 1419. W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Greeks and their Gods* (Boston 1950) 172.

2) The most recent comprehensive survey of Mycenaean religion in the light of the tablets: M. Gérard-Rousseau, "Les mentions religieuses dans les tablettes mycéniennes", *Incunabula graeca* 29 (Rome 1968).

3) E. Sittig, *De Graecorum nominibus theophoris* (Diss. Halle 20, 1912) 60-67; A. Laumonier, *Les cultes indigènes en Carie* (Paris 1958) 422; L. Zgusta, *Kleinasiatische Personennamen* (Prague 1964) 159.

where. Her cult statue, represented on coins of Stratoniceia and on the north frieze of her temple in Lagina, was not trimorphic but exhibited the "original" form of the goddess as a single body⁴).

Since children are not called after spooks, it is safe to assume that Carian theophoric names involving *hekat-* refer to a major deity free from the dark and unsavory ties to the underworld and to witchcraft held by the Hecate of classical Athens. It is argued that her Carian cult was introduced to the Greek mainland from Asia Minor in the archaic period; contamination with witches and demons (e.g. in Thessaly) eroded and infernalized her Olympian stature, transforming her finally into the Hecate we know from later traditions, the recipient of table scraps and canine blood. She is thought to appear, however, in her original "Carian" form in the earliest literary monument to her cult, the long passage in the *Theogony* (411-52) which is presumed to be the work of one of her proselytes from Asia Minor, perhaps of Hesiod himself⁵). Her praises in the *Theogony* exceed those of other Titans whom Zeus favored: she has a portion of land, sea, and sky, and mediates propitiation of gods and blessings conferred upon men⁶).

So runs the argument of Kraus and others who support the notion of a non-Greek, Anatolian origin for Hecate. I hope to show here through a re-examination of the Carian evidence that the argument is not convincing, and will conclude by presenting possible evidence for the existence of her cult in Mycenaean Greece.

Like the Hesiodic Hecate, the goddess of Lagina was benevolent, mighty, and honored above all Titans by Zeus. The west frieze of her temple depicts the Titanomachy, the decisive triumph of Zeus over

4) Epigraphical and archaeological evidence collected in Theodor Kraus, *Hekate* (Heidelberg 1960) 41-54. Cf. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Der Glaube der Hellenen* (Berlin 1931) 1.169-72; Laumonier (above note) 406-25; M. Nilsson, *GGR* 12 722-25.

5) Kraus (above note) 57-94. On Hecate's infernal aspects, cf. e.g. Theocritus 2.12 scholia; Aristophanes fr. 204 Kock (*FCG* 1.443), *Plutus* 594 & scholia, *Pax* 276 scholia; Lycophron, *Alexandra* 77.

6) For the present state of the controversy on the authenticity of *Theogony* 411-52, with bibliography, cf. M. L. West, *Hesiod, Theogony* (Oxford 1966) 276-80 and most recently J. Bollack, "Mythische Deutung und Deutung des Mythos" in M. Fuhrmann (ed.), *Terror und Spiel: Probleme der Mythenrezeption* (Munich 1971) 111-18.

darkness and brutality; Hecate stands in a prominent position, a Titan striving together with younger gods for the new order, though her participation here is not as active as it is on the famous altar at Pergamum ⁷). The birth of Zeus is shown on the east frieze, where Hecate appears handing over the stone to Kronos. As in *Theogony* 450-52, she is here the *kourotrophos par excellence*, and the *kouros* is Zeus himself ⁸). Inscriptions, too, from the temple precinct — almost all of Roman imperial date — attest to the fact that the goddess was indeed great — so great, in fact, that the priesthood of Zeus himself was a prerequisite for the priesthood of Hecate at Lagina ⁹). Games were held quinquennially in her honor ¹⁰). As on Aegina and Samothrace, mysteries of Hecate were conducted, about which nothing is known ¹¹).

It is not only the exalted grandeur of Hecate at Lagina that seems strange for a goddess whose character elsewhere, in the last two prechristian centuries at any rate, was far more Stygian than Olympian. Her *form* at Lagina is equally surprising. Seldom in this period is she represented without the three bodies which had been hers since the sculptor Alcamenes created his Hecate *epipyrgidia* for the Athenian acropolis ¹²). Though she had appeared as a single body in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C., and though a monomorphic Hecate coexisted

7) A. Schober, *Der Fries des Hekateions von Lagina* (Istanbuler Forschungen 2, Vienna 1933) 70ff. and pl. 21.

8) Ibid. pl. 2; Kraus (above, note 4) 46f.

9) Laumonier (above, note 3) 367; Kraus (above, note 4) 43.

10) Dittenberger, *OGIS* 441.133f.; Kraus (above, note 4) 43.

11) Ibid. 51.

12) Pausanias 2.30.2. Eusebius, *Praep. evang.* 3.11.32, suggested that the triple form represented Hecate's dominion over earth, sea, and sky; Servius *ad Aen.* 4.511 believed that the bodies were those of Diana, Luna, and Proserpina; Cornutus (p. 208 Osann) claimed that they represented three phases of the moon. Modern scholars seek the answer in her function as guardian of the crossing of three ways; Kraus (above, note 4) 107-12 suggests that the original *Hekataia* were three apotropaic Gorgon-like masks hung from a pillar, and that Alcamenes humanized and idealized this configuration. He points out that Cerberus, Geryoneus, and the triple herm also have underworld ties and a triple aspect. C. Christou, *Potnia Theron* (Thessalonica 1968) 36-41, taking a different approach, suggests that trimorphosis goes back to an early Greek problem in representing all the attributes of a goddess on one body, together with the notion that an idol's power is tripled when the idol is trimorphic. Only in a later period, then, are distinctions made among Moirai, Horai, Charites, Eumenides, or the three goddesses who require the "judgment" of Paris.

with the triple form for a time in the fourth century, very few single-bodied goddesses can convincingly be identified with Hecate thereafter¹³).

Can the unusual appearance of Hecate at Lagina be attributed to the steadfastness of a Carian tradition which preserved the goddess' original form despite the universal popularity of her triple image? The theory breaks down with the word "Carian", for in Caria Hecate seems to have been worshipped in her familiar *triple* form. Stratoniceia, in whose outskirts the sacred precinct of Lagina was situated, is an exception to the rule. From the first century B.C. onward, to be sure, the Stratoniceians struck coins commemorating the monomorphic Laginetan goddess. The cult statue depicted on the coinage, with a torch in the left hand and a *phialē* in the right, is close even in detail of posture and drapery to the figure of Hecate as she appears on the

13) A monomorphic Hecate is identified by inscription on an archaic seated figurine from Attica (*Arch. Zeitung* 40, 1882, 265, = *IG* 1² 836) and on three Attic red-figure vases: Beazley, *ARV* 1191/3 London (sending of Triptolemus), *ARV* 1012/1 New York (return of Persephone), *ARV* 1038/1 Ferrara (marriage procession of Peleus and Thetis). The trimorphic *Hekataia* from the British School in Athens and from the Athenian Agora which Kraus assigns to the late fifth and early fourth centuries (above, note 4, 97-101 and 119-28) are now dated to the Roman imperial period: cf. Evelyn B. Harrison, *Archaic and Archaistic Sculpture (The Athenian Agora* 11, Princeton 1965) 86-107, who puts the earliest extant *Hekataion*, the triple statue in the sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron, in the third century B.C., though admitting that the *Hekataion* in the British School probably reflects the Alcamenian archetype. There are few if any identifiable representations of Hecate in the fourth century B.C.: cf. Kraus 163f., esp. note 676. As for the later periods, Louis Robert in *Hellenica* 10, pp. 113-17, warns against calling a goddess Hecate simply because a torch or a dog appears among her attributes; the goddess of Pherae, Ennodia, is one of the more prominent victims of this confusion (*Hellenica* 12, pp. 588ff.). To his list of goddesses falsely identified as Hecate, and to those listed in Kraus p. 30 and H. Oppermann, *Zeus Panamaros* (Giessen 1924) 90f., I would add the following:

- a) *BMC Mysia* 106 # 106 (Parium): "Diana Lucifera". This coin depicts Kore Soteira, goddess of Cyzicus, and reproduces the statue of Kore (wrongly called "Demeter" in the Catalogue) which appears on the Cyzicene coins *BMC Mysia* 49 # 225 and # 228.
- b) E. Babelon (ed.), *Inventaire sommaire de la collection Waddington* (Paris 1897) # 6292, pl. 17 # 14 (Laodiceia in Phrygia): "Hecate". This must be Artemis *phosphoros*. Note triple Hecate on coin from Laodiceia to right.
- c) *BMC Lydia* 28 # 20, pl. 4 # 3 (Attaleia): "Hecate". This is Artemis; Hecate never wears a short chiton. Louis Robert, *Hellenica* 10 p. 115, notes that there is no archaeological or epigraphical evidence for the cult of Hecate in Lydia.

north frieze of her temple (figs. 1 and 2)¹⁴). But the only coin of a Carian city outside Stratoniceia which can be said with certainty to represent the Laginetan goddess is a Trajanic issue of Euhippe (a town of unknown location) which shows Hecate as she is seen on Stratoniceian coinage (fig. 3)¹⁵). Mastauran coins may also bear her Laginetan form, though it seems odd that the tall headdress (*polos* or *kalathos*), ordinarily a key to the identification of Hecate, is omitted (fig. 4)¹⁶). Furthermore, other coins of Mastaura show the usual trimorphic Hecate; it seems unlikely that she would be worshiped under both single and triple forms in one and the same city (fig. 5)¹⁷). Elsewhere in Caria, the cities of Antiocheia and Tralles struck coins bearing the image of the *triple* Hecate exclusively¹⁸). It is likely, then, that Hecate's "original", "Carian" form was housed only in her temple at Lagina.

Among the extensive ruins and epigraphical material found at Lagina, only one object, the altar of Mēnophilos (see below), can be said with certainty to antedate the first century B.C. What remains is not so much a monument to a great Anatolian goddess as it is a monument to Roman imperial policy in Asia. Whether or not the temple was erected before the Mithridatic wars¹⁹), the theme it proclaims is the eternal friendship and loyalty of an Asian city, Stratoniceia, to

14) Schober (above, note 7) 72. Fig. 2 from American Numismatic Society Collection (Caracalla & Geta).

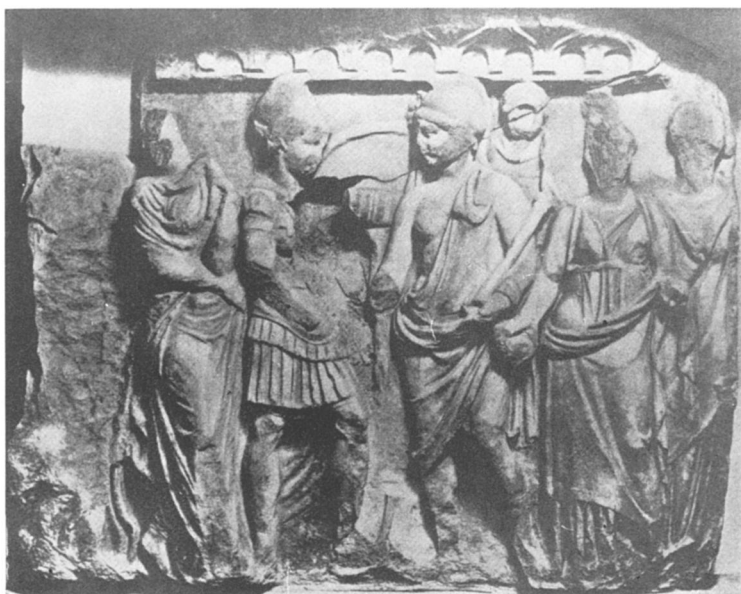
15) F. Imhoof-Blumer, *Kleinasiatische Münzen* (Vienna 1901-02) 127 # 1, pl. 5 # 21.

16) *Ibid.*, 522 # 1, pl. 20 # 9. I follow L. Robert (*Hellenica* 10 p. 115 n. 4) in placing Mastaura and Tralles in Caria rather than in Lydia. For the importance of the *polos* among several Anatolian deities, cf. V. K. Müller, *Der Polos, die griechische Götterkrone* (Diss. Berlin 1915) 62.

17) *BMC Lydia* 159 # 18, pl. 17 # 6.

18) *BMC Caria* 22 # 49, pl. 4 # 6; *BMC Lydia* 355 # 171, pl. 37 # 9.

19) J. Chamonard in *BCH* 19 (1895) 260-62 and L. Robert, *Études anatoliennes* (Paris 1937) 427 n. 2, suggest that the temple was erected soon after Sulla's conquest of Mithridates in the first century B.C. to commemorate the loyalty of Stratoniceia to Rome. The erection of the temple is not mentioned, however, on the extant portions of Sulla's letter or the *Senatus consultum* of 81 B.C. inscribed on the temple wall (*OGIS* 441). Laumonier (above, note 3) 351-58 argues, as do Schober and Kraus, for a date late in the second century B.C., after Caria had been united to the kingdom of Pergamum under Roman authority; the temple would exemplify the religious renewal and neoclassicism spreading through the Greek East during this period. Whatever the date of the temple, its Roman orientation is an outstanding characteristic.





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"the Roman masters" (*kyrioi Romaioi*), to quote from an inscription on the temple itself ²⁰). The Titanomachy of the west frieze and the triumph of the young Zeus may be subtle allusions to the mission of Rome in the Greek East during the last two prechristian centuries. The north frieze is more direct: there Hecate presides over the gesture of alliance between a warrior and an Amazon, figures symbolizing Rome and Asia respectively ²¹). In view of inscribed references to the many interventions of the goddess on behalf of her people, her precinct, and the "Roman masters" during incidents which are variously thought to include the revolt of Aristonicus, the Mithridatic wars, the invasion of Labienus, and Parthian incursions, it is tempting to suppose that Hecate has her epithet *epiphanestatē* for reasons more political than religious. The Roman Senate, Julius Caesar, and Augustus had more than one occasion to acknowledge and reward, through the granting and confirming of *asylia* and similar benefits, the loyalty of this citizenry and their Laginetan goddess. One inscription testifies, in fact, to her association in cult as *soteira epiphanēs* with the goddess Roma herself ²²). One wonders whether the Laginetan Hecate would have achieved any notoriety at all if it had not been for the political and military events of the first century B.C. If she was a "great" goddess, it was Rome that made her so.

Yet there had been some form of religious activity in Lagina before the first century B.C. Tentative exploration of a nearby necropolis has yielded potsherds dating as far back as the geometric period ²³), and an inscribed altar from the second prechristian century attests to the worship of Hecate during the period of Rhodian dominion ²⁴). The altar was dedicated by one Mēnophilos, a priest of Hecate who had been "restored by the Council to the priesthood of Helios and Rhodos". It would seem, then, that Hecate's later association with the goddess Roma had had a parallel, or perhaps even a paradeigm, in her

20) L. Robert (above note) 517-20.

21) Fig. 1 (= Schober pl. 11); cf. Robert (above, note 19), Kraus (above, note 4) 46, Laumonier (above, note 3) 351.

22) *OGIS* 441.133f. Tacitus, *Annales* 3.62. Robert (above, note 19) 516-23. R. K. Sherk, *Roman Documents from the Greek East* (Baltimore 1969) 105-11 (with bibliography on *OGIS* 441). Laumonier (above, note 3) 359-61.

23) Y. Boysal in *Anadolu* 12 (1968) 81-93.

24) Foucart in *BCH* 14 (1890) 365 # 4. Cf. Laumonier (above, note 3) 358f.

association in cult with the deities who personified Rhodes²⁵). Of religion at Lagina before the introduction of Rhodian cults, or before the Macedonian founding of Stratoniceia in the third century B.C.²⁶), nothing is known. It is natural to suppose that a goddess had been worshipped there from time immemorial; some sort of sanctuary must have existed at Lagina long before the first century B.C.; but I dispute the assumption that the goddess' name had always been "Hecate".

Hecate must have been a Greek goddess. In the first place, almost all the archaeological and literary evidence for her cult comes from the Greek mainland, and especially from Attica, from earliest times down to the second century B.C. Hesiod's "Hymn to Hecate", even if it did not form part of the original *Theogony*, is no later than the archaic period²⁷). There are numerous references to Hecate in Attic drama²⁸), and, unless Aristophanes exaggerates, a Hekataion stood before every house in Athens (*Wasps* 804). In Asia Minor, only one monument can be associated with Hecate before the second century B.C., an archaic altar in the precinct of Apollo Delphinus in Miletus²⁹). That city is "Carian", to be sure — but the goddess is not in a sanctuary of her own, and has no connection with the father of the gods, as she has at Lagina.

Her association with Apollo at Miletus brings up the question of the theophoric names in *hekat-*. Their absence on the Greek mainland does not prove that the goddess was less important there than in Caria. In the fifth century, theophoric names *in general* are rare in Attica, as Dow has pointed out³⁰). I would suggest, moreover, that the names do not involve Hecate at all. Significant in this connection is Strabo's remark that a small group of islands between Lesbos and the Asian mainland are called the *Hekatonnēsoi* after Apollo Hekatos

25) On the divinized personification of free cities in this period as a response to ruler cults, cf. Nilsson, *GGR* II² 144f. When the cult of the Roman emperor is introduced at Lagina (Diehl-Cousin in *BCH* 11, 1887, 155 # 61), the Hecate-Caesar-Roma configuration seems exactly parallel to the earlier Hecate-Helios-Rhodos triad.

26) Cf. Ruge s.v. *Stratonikeia*, *RE* Ser. 2, 4A col. 322-24.

27) Cf. B. A. van Groningen, *La composition littéraire archaïque grecque* (Amsterdam 1958) 267-75.

28) Collected in Kraus (above, note 4) 84-94.

29) G. Kawerau & A. Rehm, *Das Delphinion in Milet* (Berlin 1914) 153 fig. 41.

30) S. Dow, "The Egyptian Cults in Athens", *HTR* 30 (1937) 216-27.

(13.2.5). Among authors before the Hellenistic age, the epithet *hekatos* is applied to Apollo, and can stand alone to signify the god, in Homer, Alcman, and Simonides³¹). The meaning of *hekatos* is not clear; the Greeks usually understood "far-shooting", and this traditional etymology is sometimes proposed for Hecate's name as well³²). In any event, if *hekatos* was, as it appears, a popular epithet for this god among Ionian Greeks, coastal and insular, in the archaic period, and if Miletus in "Caria" was an important center for his cult, then the naming of Ionian boys, or even of Hellenized Carians, after Apollo Hekatos would seem perfectly natural.

To return to the Laginetan goddess: I submit that her name has nothing especially "Carian" about it; on the contrary, the name "Hecate" is an aspect of the process of her Hellenization, and was probably assigned by Rhodians who saw in the Greek Hecate traits similar to those of the goddess they encountered at Lagina. Like her, most indigenous Anatolian goddesses underwent sooner or later an *interpretatio Graeca*. At Ephesus the local deity had been called "Artemis" from the beginning of the historical period³³). In Pisidia a grave-goddess with torches and serpents who had been called "Edbēbē" came to be known in the Hellenistic era as "Mother Leto"³⁴). Such transformations could occur as late as the third or even the second century. What I believe happened to the Laginetan goddess in this period is analogous to the change undergone by the

31) *Iliad* 1.385, 7.83, 19.71 and 295. Alcman *PMG* 46. Simonides, *PMG* 573 (cp. 950 b). Cf. H. Usener, *Götternamen* (Bonn 1896) 37f. The attempt of Kraus (above, note 4) 13-17 to see in *hekatos* the name of an erstwhile consort of a great Anatolian goddess "Hekate" puts the cart before the horse. The relationship of Hecate to Apollo at Miletus is a local construction and does not, as Nilsson notes in his review of Kraus (*AJA* 65, 1961, 78), corroborate the theory.

32) Cf. Hesychius *hekatoio: makrobolou*. Similarly for both *hekatos* and Hecate, K. Kerényi, *Die Mythologie der Griechen* (Zürich 1951) 40. Prellwitz, *Glotta* 17 (1929) 145ff., connects both with *hekōn*, "willing".

33) W. Helck, *Betrachtungen zur grossen Göttin und den ihr verbundenen Gottheiten* (Religion & Kultur der alten Mittelmeerwelt in Parallelforschungen 2), Munich/Vienna 1971, pp. 203 & 247, suggests that the Ephesian goddess, like other western Anatolian goddesses who exhibit erotic overtones not ordinarily associated with the sister of Apollo, was named "Artemis" only because she inhabited wild places; Aphrodite/Astarte would have been a more appropriate choice, but it was too early for her cult to be known through the Phoenicians.

34) O. Fiebiger, "Ein Weiherelief aus Pisidien", *Jahreshefte des österr. arch. Institutes* 23 (1926) 308-14.

goddess of Perge in Pamphylia, a change vividly documented on coins. Pergaeon issues of the early second century B.C. show the city goddess, wearing a short chiton and holding a torch, and identified by an inscription in the dialect and epichoric alphabet of Pamphylia: **ΙΑΝΑΨΑC ΓΡΕΙΙΑC** (= *koinē* ANASSAS PERGAIAS) (fig. 6) ³⁵). This type is subsequently replaced by a representation of the same goddess with the inscription ARTEMIDOS PERGAIAS (fig. 7) ³⁶). Evidently the Pergaeans had been content to call their torch-goddess simply *wanassa*, yielding only in a relatively late period to the impulse, almost universal in Anatolia, to identify her with Artemis.

The choice of the name "Hecate" for the goddess of Lagina was probably influenced by the following circumstances:

- 1) By the end of the third century B.C. the name of Hecate and the epithet of Artemis, *hekatē*, had been confused often enough to permit a single-bodied goddess to be called "Hecate". This happened on Delos and on Rhodes itself with the grave-goddess (Artemis-) Hecate ³⁷).
- 2) Attributes of the Laginetan goddess (*e.g.* torch, *phialē*?) must have resembled those of the Greek Hecate. The dog who sometimes appears beside the goddess on Stratoniceian coins recalls not only the mainland Hecate but also an indigenous Lydian dog-goddess with the improbable name "Nenēnēnē" ³⁸).
- 3) Her "Titanic" character, together with the relationship of the

35) American Numismatic Society Collection (second cent. B.C.). Cf. B. V. Head, *Historia Numorum* 702.

36) Ibid. (Hadrian).

37) G. Siebert, "Artémis Soteira à Délos", *BCH* 90 (1966) 455-59; G. Gualandi, "Artemis-Hekate", *Revue archéologique* 1969, pp. 233-72 (esp. 265ff.). Seeds of the subsequent confusion of the two goddesses are already sown in classical Athens, where the epithet *hekatos* was sometimes applied to the sister of Apollo. When Euripides makes Antigone exclaim ἰὼ πόρνια παῖ Λατοῦς ἐνάτα (*Phoen.* 109) upon beholding the Argive army, he must mean Artemis and not the child of Perses and Asteria, *Artemin hekatan* in Aeschylus, *Suppl.* 676, need not involve Hecate at all, nor does *Artemidos hekatēs* in the treasury inventory of 429/8 (IG 1² 310.192-4). The epithet *hekatē* ("far-shooting", "hitting the mark", or however the Athenians understood it) was as applicable to Artemis as *hekatos* was to her brother. Inevitably, the integrity of a goddess with a name identical with Artemis' epithet would suffer.

38) Keil & Premerstein, "Bericht über eine Reise in Lydien und der südlichen Aiolis", *Denkschr. der kais. Akademie der Wissenschaft* 53 (Vienna 1910) 2.82, # 178.

Laginetan goddess to the Carian Zeus Panamaros (or Chrysaoreus) must have reminded the Rhodians of Hesiod's Hecate. The "Hesiodic" character of the temple friezes can be compared with that of the Titanomachy on the earlier Pergamene Altar.

- 4) The Laginetan goddess may have had a more infernal character than scholars have been willing to assume³⁹). If her *mystēria* were in any way analogous to what we know of such rites elsewhere, some concern with the underworld is indicated. The *kleidos pompē*, the ritual carrying of a key which is mentioned so often in inscriptions at Lagina, may hint at another link with the infernal. Kraus and others see in the *kleidophoria* a sign of guardianship over terrestrial or celestial gates and doors⁴⁰); I suggest that the key may have opened up the nether regions. A Greek parallel may be inferred from a statue of Pluto at Olympia: he was shown holding a key, for "they say that what is called Hades has been locked up by Pluto, and that nobody returns therefrom" (Pausanias 5.20.3).
- 5) Like the goddess of Lagina, Hecate was sometimes invoked as *Soteira* on Rhodes and Kos, and in Phrygia to the east⁴¹).

This paper began with the suggestion that the goddess Hecate may be as old and as Hellenic as other deities whose origins can be traced back to the Mycenaean age. Greek tradition ascribes her praises to Hesiod; if the tradition is right, the *Theogony* offers our oldest document pertaining to the goddess. It may be worth noticing that

39) Schwabl's review of Kraus in *Anzeiger für die Altertumswissenschaft* 16 (1963) 23f. takes Kraus to task for the assumption that there was nothing monstrous about the Laginetan (or Hesiodic) Hecate.

40) References in Kraus (above, note 4) 48-50.

41) Numerous instances on coins and monuments of Phrygia: cf. Kraus (above, note 4) n. 207 and 167f. Kos: A. Maiuri, *Nuova Silloge Epigrafica di Rodi e Cos* (Florence 1925) # 676. Rhodes: *IG* 12.1.914 (metrical dedication by priestess of "Soteira" to "Phosphoros Enodia"). Delos and other islands: Siebert (above, note 37) 457f. I hope the arguments advanced in this paper corroborate the opinion expressed briefly in a footnote by J. Hatzfeld, *BCH* 44 (1920) 86 n. 1, that the Laginetan goddess could not have been assimilated to Hecate "avant que cette partie peu accessible de la Carie pût, grâce à la fondation de Stratonicee (vers 265), recevoir directement des influences helléniques". I believe those "influences" to be Rhodian because the city fell under Rhodian control within a decade or two of its foundation, and because the effects of Rhodian religious interpretation are manifest at Lagina. Cf. note 25 above.

Hesiod, while emphasizing above all the honor she receives from Zeus, brings Hecate into a close relationship with two other gods specifically, Poseidon and Hermes (*Theogony* 440-47). Like her, these deities lend valuable assistance to men who live by harvesting the sea or by pasturing herds of cattle, goats, and sheep. Her ties with these venerable Hellenic deities in the *Theogony* may give some clue to her original standing among the Greeks.

One side of a much-discussed Linear B tablet (Tn 316) records ritual offerings at Pylos to a number of personages, most of whom are taken to be divine⁴²). Poseidon heads the list, and two other male deities can be identified: Hermes, Zeus, and a "son of Zeus", Drimios. Since Poseidon, Zeus, and Hermes are precisely the gods with whom Hecate is linked in the *Theogony*, it is tempting to seek her on the tablet under some feminine *epiklēsis*. The goddesses of this side of Tn 316, aside from Hera who receives tribute in company with Zeus, are *Pere82*, *Ipemedēja*, and *Diūja*; judging from their close grouping on the tablet, they seem to have been worshipped as a triad; Zeus, Hera, and Drimios also appear to constitute a separate category on the same document.

Since the value of the syllable *82 is not yet clear, the name of the first goddess cannot be ascertained. Guesses include *Peleia* ("the Dove")⁴³), *Presba* ("the Elder")⁴⁴), and *Brēssa* (a conjecture from *Brēsagenes* and *Brēssaïos*, titles of Dionysus)⁴⁵). Chadwick, who propose the value *swa* for *82, joins those who seek in *Pere82* an early form of Persephone's name: "We might speculate on identifying /*Preswa*/ with *Pers-* in the first part of the name *Persephonē*, which is presumably non-Greek, though perhaps deformed by popular etymology (cf. *Pherrephatta*)"⁴⁶).

42) M. Ventris & J. Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* # 172; Gérard-Rousseau (above, note 2) 22f., and "Les sacrifices à Pylos", *Studi micenei ed egeo-anatolici* 13 (1971) 140-42.

43) L. R. Palmer in *Minos* 4 (1956) 132.

44) M. Lejeune, *Mémoires de philologie mycénienne* (Paris 1958) 243: *Peresa* = **Presza* > *Presba*. D. de Venuto in *Atti e memorie del primo congresso di micenologia* (Rome 1968) 2.582: *Perekwa* = **Presgwa* > *Presba*.

45) G. Pugliese Carratelli in *Atti e Memorie dell'Accademia Toscana di Scienze e Lettere "La Colombaria"* 21 (1956) 5.

46) J. Chadwick, "The Group *sw* in Mycenaean", *Minos* 9 (1968) 65; cf. Gérard-Rousseau (above, note 2) 173f. Like Nilsson (*GGR* I² 474-77), G. Zuntz, *Persephone* (Oxford 1971) 75-83 considers the Greek pair Demeter-Kore

Ipmedeja seems at first sight to be the Greek name Iphimedeia, but initial *ipe-* rather than *wipi-* makes the identification difficult ⁴⁷). If "Iphimedeia" is the later Greek form of this goddess' name, the possibilities become exciting. *Iphimedeia* (or *Iphimedē*) was an early variant of *Iphigeneia*, the name of Agamemnon's daughter. According to the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, "Iphimedē", after her rescue by Artemis from the sacrificial altar, was made an immortal attendant of the goddess and is worshipped under her name, Artemis, with the epithet *ein(h)odia*, "in the road". Since this epithet was properly applied to Hecate as guardian of crossroads, Stesichorus and others assumed that Hesiod meant to identify Iphigeneia/Iphimedeia with Hecate; the frequent confusion of Artemis with Hecate undoubtedly helped to confirm this identification for all time ⁴⁸). On the other hand, the possibility should not be overlooked that the poet of the *Catalogue* did really mean *einodia* to signify the traditional goddess of crossroads — that he knew, in other words, an old tradition which actually identified Iphimedeia with Hecate.

In spite of her name, *Diuja* is not likely to have direct connections with Zeus, who appears on this tablet in a separate category with his wife Hera. Monique Gérard-Rousseau, who points out that her name (with alternative spelling *Diwija* on An 607) has etymological connections, through the theme **dei-w-/*dy-ew-/*di-w-*, with words in Indoeuropean languages signifying not only "deity", but also "radiance" and "wealth", suggests that her function has something to do with riches ⁴⁹). If *Diuja* is a "bright" goddess who possesses, gives, or guards wealth, and if "wealth" be understood in an immediate, Hesiodic sense (actual and potential riches entrusted to and harvested from the earth), she may correspond to the Greek Demeter, whose name does not appear on Mycenaean tablets ⁵⁰). The description of Demeter's

originally separate from the chthonic and probably prehellenic Persephone. Cf. R. Stiglitz, *Die grossen Göttinnen Arkadiens* (Oesterreichisches archäologisches Institut, Sonderschrift 15, 1967).

47) Gérard-Rousseau (above, note 2) 117.

48) R. Merkelbach & M. L. West, *Fragmenta Hesiodica* (Oxford 1967) fr. 23.17-26; Stesichorus, *PMG* 215; Pausanias 1.43.1. I am grateful to T. B. L. Webster for directing my attention to the Hesiodic fragment.

49) Gérard-Rousseau (above, note 2) 69f.

50) Cf. Gérard-Rousseau (above, note 2) 53f. and 240-42. Many scholars (not including Webster or Gérard-Rousseau) believe Mycenaean *wanasoi* refers to the

functions (in company with Persephone and Hecate) at the end of her Homeric *Hymn* may be relevant here (483-89):

Then, when (Demeter) the bright goddess (*ḗia theāōn*) had taught all, they departed for Olympus to the other gods' assembly. There they dwell beside Zeus whose joy is the thunderbolt, solemn and reverend goddesses. Prosperous (*meg' olbios*) is the one among earthly humans whom those goddesses cherish; straightway do they send as a guest to his great house Plutus, who gives wealth to mortals.

In suggesting that the triad of goddesses who receive tribute at Pylos are early forms of Persephone, Hecate, and Demeter, I am painfully aware of the conjectural nature of the evidence adduced. The three goddesses are, however, associated in the *Hymn to Demeter*, where Hecate is made a constant companion of Persephone (440). The triad appears on Attic red-figure vases with Eleusinian themes⁵¹), and has been plausibly identified in an archaic metope from Selinunte (sixth century B.C.) on which each of the three goddesses (one wearing a polos) brandishes a diminutive torch⁵²).

Literary, archaeological, and epigraphical evidence down to the end of the fourth century B.C. indicates that the worship of Hecate was limited to the Ionian and Aeolian *poleis* and their colonies on either side of the Aegean — to the population, in other words, which claimed blood ties with the fallen Mycenaean rulers. The fact that Hecate enjoyed special favor among these groups may indicate that her cult was known in the Bronze Age. Her name remains a puzzle, but its meaning and etymology are no more obscure than those of the other Olympians, with the sole exception of Zeus himself. In the *Theogony* Hecate is a Greek goddess. The fact that she is also a *great* goddess there may reflect her earlier standing in the Mycenaean pantheon, but her greatness in the *Theogony* remains a local interpretation. Equally "local" is her greatness in Caria during a much later era. While Hesiodic influence may have co-operated with Roman imperial policy to make Hecate great at Lagina, the influence never travelled the other way. Arguments for Hecate's "Anatolian" origin are not in accord with the evidence.

"two queens" Demeter and Kore; but if Tn 316 antedates the complete assimilation of Persephone to the Greek Kore, then the earth-mother herself may have had separate standing. See note 46 above.

51) Above, note 13.

52) V. Tusa, *Archeologia classica* 21 (1969) 153-71.

CH'ONDOGYO ESCHATOLOGY

BY

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Ch'ondogyo is a unique, modern, humanistic, and syncretistic religion of Korea, which has a philosophical orientation and system of thought. It has about 600,000 members. It was founded in 1860 by Ch'oe Suun (Che-u). Ch'ondogyo means "The Religion of Heavenly Way." It was originally called Tonghak meaning "Eastern Learning." Ch'ondogyo as a mass reform movement in modern Korean society falls within the framework of a "revitalization movement." Through the Tonghak Revolution of 1894 it made a most significant impact upon modern Korean society, having helped to bring about the end of feudalism in the country. Although Ch'ondogyo was founded as a nativistic religion over against Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Christianity, it synthesized some of the essential aspects of these religions, especially the Confucian concept of *chun-tzu* (superior man) and the Taoist concept of *wu-wei* (natural life).

Some of the most fundamental doctrines of Ch'ondogyo are "man is God (Heaven)," "to treat man as God," and "the Kingdom of Heaven on earth." In this paper, the Ch'ondogyo eschatology in terms of salvation and destiny of man will be analyzed and discussed. The source material consists of the works of Ch'ondogyo leaders. Especially the works of the following leaders are frequently used: (1) Ch'oe Suun, the founder of Ch'ondogyo (1824-1864); (2) Yi Ton-hwa, a great systematic thinker of Ch'ondogyo thought in the 1930's; and (3) Paek Se-myōng, the most important thinker in Ch'ondogyo in the past several decades.

A. THE SALVATION AND DESTINY OF MAN: INDIVIDUAL DIMENSION

1. *The Nature of Salvation and Destiny*

a) *Curing Disease and the Creation of the New Humanity*

Ch'ondogyo defines evil as a "disease," and the cure of it is the goal

and an essence of salvation in Ch'ōndogyo. The technical term for salvation in Ch'ōndogyo is *chein chilbyong*, which means literally "saving man from disease." This word was first used by Suun, who realized the nature of evil as "disease" and the urgent necessity of its cure. ¹⁾

The process of the cure is called by Paek Se-myōng as "the improvement of humanity" (*in'gan kaeryang*). And it is also called "the re-creation of humanity" (*in'gan kaejo*). ²⁾ The creation of the new humanity in Ch'ōndogyo is in reality nothing more than the re-creation of the human spirit into the authentic moral dimension.

Ch'ōndogyo aims at a new creation of the human spirit, because all the actions of man proceed from his spirit or mind. According to Ch'ōndogyo, the man who has a newly created spirit is the authentic humanity free from the vulgar way of life. Such a man is considered free from anxiety, sorrow, and despair. ³⁾

The new creation of manhood is characterized also as the resurrection of the internal spirit or soul, which really means the resurrection of conscience. ⁴⁾ This further means freedom from selfish interests, and particularly from material lust and falsehood. According to Ch'ōndogyo, the man who possesses a resurrected new conscience only acts the truth and justice. Therefore, the re-creation of the spirit of man is fundamental in the movement of the creation of the new humanity, and that is the basis of the establishment of a new world, according to Ch'ōndogyo. ⁵⁾

b) *The Eternal Life of Manhood*

Our question now is what would happen with such a man of the newly created spirit. Does his spirit or soul survive as an entity after his physical death? This question must be considered in relation with the basically this-worldly perspective of the Ch'ōndogyo eschatology.

1) Ch'oe Suun, "P'odongmun" (The Declaration of Virtue), *Ch'ōndogyo Kyōngjōn* (Ch'ōndogyo Scripture) (Seoul: Ch'ōndogyo Central HQ, 1961), p. 4.

2) Paek Se-myōng, *Tonghak Sasang kwa Ch'ōndogyo* (Tonghak Thought and Ch'ōndogyo) (Seoul: Tonghaksa, 1956), p. 83.

3) Yi Ton-hwa, *Sinin Ch'orhak* (Philosophy of New Man) (Seoul: Ilsinsa, 1963), p. 152.

4) Yi Yōng-bok, "Sinin'gan Ch'angjo Undong" (The Movement of the Creation of New man), *Sinin'gan* (The New Humanity), XVIII (December, 1960), 30.

5) *Ibid.*

Ch'ondogyo conceives that the *Ch'ondo* (the Heavenly Way) is the principle or teaching of the eternal life. ⁶⁾ Paek Se-myōng explains that *Ch'ondo* means the law of the development of the life of the universe and that the original body of the universe is one great life body. Hence, the *Ch'ondo* deals with the principle of life only and denies fundamentally the principle of death. ⁷⁾

This notion of the *Ch'ondo* only as the principle of life and the denial of death may sound absurd and strange. In one sense, of course, Ch'ondogyo does not deny the fact of death of individual lives. But Ch'ondogyo views such a death simply as the stage of the exchange of the old and the new forms of life for the development of the Totality of Life. This is compared with the principle of the exchange of old and new cells within one body of man, which is necessary for the development of the life of the body. ⁸⁾

Furthermore, Ch'ondogyo views the individual life of man in relation to the Original Totality of Life that is God even in the eschatology. Since the individual life is the partial body of the Original Totality of Life, Ch'ondogyo conceives the unity between the two. There is harmony and peace in the life of the individual as it participates fully in the life of the Totality, which is the Ground or Source of Life itself. ⁹⁾ In such a monistic perspective of the Ch'ondogyo eschatology, we find a profoundly mystical notion of the union between man and God which is regarded as the realization of the eternal life of man.

Ch'ondogyo affirms neither the immortality of soul nor the immortality of body, but the immortality of manhood. This is also an attempt to see man as the unity from the monistic standpoint. Paek Se-myōng asserts the Ch'ondogyo view of the eternal life as follows:

In essence, the concept of eternal life in the system of *Ch'ondo*, which is the the law of the development of the life-body, is neither the doctrine of the eternal life of soul nor the doctrine of the eternal life of body, but only the doctrine of the eternal life of manhood (character). ¹⁰⁾

6) Paek, p. 86. The "principle" or "teaching" here is the liberal rendering to *tobōp* which literally means "the law of Way." The word, *changsang* literally means "long life," but here the liberal rendering of "the eternal life" would be more adequate.

7) *Ibid.*

8) *Ibid.*, p. 87.

9) *Ibid.*, p. 88.

10) *Ibid.*

Ch'öndogyo affirms that the authentic manhood or person whose spirit is created anew, and who does only good things for humanity, lives an eternal life in the history of mankind. This means that a good man is eternally rewarded with honor and praise in the memory of mankind on this earth and in this history of time, for time is eternal, according to Ch'öndogyo.¹¹⁾ On the other hand, evil-doers will be despised and dishonored in the history of man, which constitutes the eternal punishment of evil-doers in Ch'öndogyo eschatology.

Hence, Ch'öndogyo opposes the other-worldly eschatology. Ch'öndogyo claims that the other-worldly eschatology, which believes the reward of good or punishment of evil in the life hereafter is never accepted by all men universally. However, this-worldly eschatology of Ch'öndogyo, which believes the eternal reward and eternal punishment of the manhood (character) is something that cannot be denied. Therefore, it causes all men to move toward good moral character and life.¹²⁾ Ch'öndogyo, therefore, maintains firmly the concept of the eternal life of man in this world. Somehow, the Ch'öndogyo notion of the eternal life lacks the idea of divine grace which is an essential and powerful motif in many religions. Such a this-worldly and humanistic eschatology would not have universal appeal.

In the Ch'öndogyo notion of the eternal life of manhood or character, enjoying the reward or suffering the punishment seems to be abstract and unreal. That is, after the physical death of a person, there seems to be neither place nor even the "person" with a feeling to enjoy or suffer, for the Ch'öndogyo eschatology affirms the eternal life of the reward or punishment in terms of "the memory of many people." Such a notion would not be attractive to those who desire the eternal life in "heaven" or "paradise" in terms of some concrete reality with positive awareness.

This-worldly, humanistic, and ethical notion of the eternal life in Ch'öndogyo is related very intimately to its notion of God, who is defined as a somewhat impersonal Totality of Life. This stands in a sharp contrast to the other-worldly eschatology which is related to the idea of God who is conceived as the personal Ruler and Judge of men, who either rewards men in Heaven or punishes others in Hell.

11) *Ibid.*, p. 106.

12) *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107.

c) *The Personalism of Divine-Mystery upon the Earth*

The doctrine of the eternal life of manhood is also called "the personalism of the divine-mystery upon the earth" (*chisang sinsŏn ūi in'gyōk chuui*).¹³⁾ The notion of *sinsŏn*, which can be rendered as the mystery, divine mystery or fairy, is one of the most important concepts in Ch'ondogyo. It has its origin in Taoism, which is also called *Sōndo*, meaning the "Mystery Way" or "Mystery Religion."¹⁴⁾ The influence of Taoism upon Ch'ondogyo, in this respect, is frankly acknowledged by Paek Se-myōng, one of the most authoritative interpreters of Ch'ondogyo thought.¹⁵⁾

Suun expressed frequently the state of the Ch'ondogyo manhood as the divine mystery upon the earth. He said in *Kyohun'ga* (Song of Instruction), "The people of the world that enter into the Way become the superior man (*kun-ja*) from that day and become natural (*muwī ihwa*). Isn't this divine mystery upon the earth?"¹⁶⁾

Here we notice, in the use of the word *kun-ja* (the superior man), the influence of the Confucian concept of *chun-tzu*, and in the use of the word, *muwī ihwa*, the influence of the Taoist concept of *wu-wei* (inaction) naturalism upon the Ch'ondogyo concept of the authentic manhood.

The notion of divine mystery signifies a sort of superman in the transcendent world, in which anxiety, pain, and sorrow are absent, and in which eternal life is a joyful reality. The mysterious or spiritualized sage (*hsien-jen* in Chinese and *sōnin* in Korean) is a kind of superman, who has a perfect moral character and mysterious, magical, and spiritual powers.¹⁷⁾

Suun, however, modified the realm of divine mystery from heaven, the transcendent world, to the earth, the realm of our present existence. Thus, the Ch'ondogyo position, which is based upon the original notion of Suun, is the personalism or humanism of divine and mysterious life upon this earth.¹⁸⁾

13) *Ibid.*, pp. 61 ff.

14) *Ibid.*, Cf. Holmes Welch, *Taoism: The Parting of the Way* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), pp. 91-96.

15) Paek, pp. 61-2.

16) Ch'oe Suun, "Kyohun'ga" (The Song of Instruction), *Ch'ondogyo Kyōng-jōn*, p. 85.

17) Welch, *op. cit.*

18) Paek, p. 62.

The personalism of such a mystery and the life of divinity upon the earth means, therefore, the perfect moral life and happy heavenly life in this world. It is the humanization of divine life, making the mysterious and transcendent ideal completely immanent and concrete. The Ch'ondogyo position is the present mysticism, which embraces the dimensions of ontology, ethics, and eschatology. It is radically this-worldly eschatology, negating the other-worldly reality of heaven, paradise, or the divine-mystery.

2. *Spiritual Training as the Way of Salvation and Eternal Life*

The method of curing disease or the way of saving man from evil and thereby achieving union with God and eternal life is called *suryōn*, which means "the spiritual training."¹⁹) Sometimes, this method is also called *sudōk*, which means "the training of virtue,"²⁰) or *sudo*, which means "religious training."²¹) These terms are interchangeable, and they denote the spiritual and moral training of the whole man toward union with God, the Totality of Life, and thereby the attainment of eternal life.

Spiritual training in Ch'ondogyo, which is the method of securing salvation or eternal life of man, can be considered in the categories of *yōngbu* (the spiritual symbol), *susim chōnggi* (keeping mind with right energy), and *okwan* (the five rules of practice).

a) *The Spiritual Symbol: The Mysterious Medicine*

For the cure of disease, Ch'ondogyo conceives the medicine, which is called *sōnyak*, "the mysterious medicine." The mysterious or divine medicine in Ch'ondogyo is signified by *yōngbu*, which means "the spiritual symbol."

These terms, *sōnyak* and *yōngbu* originated in Suun's so-called revelatory experience. God revealed to Suun and said, "I have the spiritual symbol; its name is the mysterious medicine, and its image is like the Great Ultimate (*t'aegūk*), and its image is also like *kung kung*."

19) Yi Ton-hwa, *In Nae Ch'on Youi* (The Essential Meaning of 'Man is God') (Seoul: Ch'ondogyo Central HQ, 1968), pp. 106 ff.

20) Ch'oe Suun, "Sudongmun" (the Writing on Training virtue), *Ch'ondogyo Kyōngjōn*, p. 18 ff. In this work, Suun devotes his entire thought to the topic of training the spiritual and moral nature of man.

21) Ch'oe Haewōl, "Nanui Mundap" (Dialogue on Difficult Questions), *Ch'ondogyo Kyōngjōn*, pp. 212-214.

Receive this spiritual symbol and save people from the disease.”²²⁾ Hence, according to the revelation of God, Suun declared, “I have hidden the medicine of immortality in my bosom. Its form is *kungŭl*. And as I memorize the incantation of the eternal life, twenty-one are the letters.”²³⁾

Kung is the symbol of eternity, God's Life, or *Ch'ōndo* (the Heavenly Way) in the vertical dimension of the spiral form, and *ŭl* is the symbol with the same meaning as *kung* in the horizontal form.²⁴⁾ The picture of these lettersymbols is similar to and based upon the picture of *t'aegŭk*.²⁵⁾

Thus, in accordance with the so-called “revelation,” Suun used the symbols of *t'aegŭk* and *kungŭl* to denote the nature of the mysterious medicine. Both *t'aegŭk* and *kungŭl* are the symbols of the Ultimate Reality or Source of Life.²⁶⁾ In Ch'ōndogyo they are also the symbols of healing power, the life-renewing mysterious medicine and the medicine of immortality.

According to Ch'ōndogyo, after the “revelation” experience, Suun attained the state of “the divine mystery”, that is, the state of the mystical union with God. When Suun applied the spiritual symbols to others, it is said even the physical diseases of some people were healed, but, at the same time, some were not healed. The reason was that those who were healed lived their lives in sincere faith according to the will of God and for God, while those who were not healed lived immorally against the will of God.²⁷⁾

The spiritual symbol (*yōngbu*) is identical with *Ch'ōndo* (the Heavenly Way) as the way of salvation. And in effect, the spiritual symbol, the mysterious medicine, the medicine of immortality, and *Ch'ōndo* are interchangeable, as they all signify the means of salvation and eternal life for man.

22) “P'odongmun,” *Ch'ōndogyo Kyōngjōn*, p. 4.

23) “Sudongmun,” *Ibid.*, p. 23.

24) Han T'ae-yōn, *Ch'ōndo Sipsam Kang* (Thirteen Lectures on the Heavenly Way) (Seoul: Yōngjin Munhwasa, 1967), p. 58.

25) *Ibid.*, p. 127.

26) *T'aegŭk* as the symbol of the Great or Supreme Ultimate, that is, the Ultimate Source of all things, finds its origin in Chinese philosophy. See Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, trans. Derk Bodde (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), I, 384.

27) Paek, p. 81.

The spiritual symbol in Ch'ōndogyo is the symbol of union, salvation, and eternal life simultaneously when man receives it with the existential understanding. It can be said that *yōngbu* in Ch'ōndogyo is not only the eschatological symbol of the cure and immortality of manhood, but also the ontological and ethical symbol, for it signifies the *Ch'ōndo*, which is the law of the development of the Original Body of Life and man's union with God in essence, will, and life. Paek Se-myōng interprets *yōngbu* simply as the symbol of ethico-ontologico-eschatological union with God or just as the symbol of "the improvement of manhood," which is the reformation of the spiritual and moral nature of man.²⁸⁾ Hence, we find the ethical and mystical tendency of Ch'ōndogyo eschatology in the notion of *yōngbu*.

b) *Keeping Mind and Having Right Energy*

Another important and fundamental aspect of spiritual and moral training as the method of salvation and eternal life in Ch'ōndogyo is called *susim chōnggi*, which means "keeping mind and having right energy."

This spiritual training of *susim chōnggi* is applicable to man both before and after his salvation. In other words, man must have right spirit and good moral conduct in order to have union with God. Once he is united with God, he must continue to maintain a deeper dimension of union with God through the method of *susim chōnggi*.

Susim means keeping one's heart and mind pure and right, free from evil desires. *Chōnggi* means the pure, true, good, and righteous conduct of man. Hence, *susim* denotes the inner dimension of true manhood, and *chōnggi* denotes the outward dimension of true manhood.²⁹⁾

Therefore, while Confucius taught the essence of true manhood in the four categories, namely, *in* (goodness, kindness or love); *ūi* (righteousness), *ye* (propriety or rite) and *chi* (knowledge), Suun taught it in two categories, namely, *susim*, the right mind and *chōnggi*, the right conduct. These two categories embrace, in effect, the entire realm of man's thought and action.

Thus, the method of *susim chōnggi* is an essential way of salvation in Ch'ōndogyo. This seems to be a more ethical and gradual process as

28) *Ibid.*, pp. 83-88.

29) Han, pp. 120-124.

the method of spiritual training for salvation than *yōngbu*, which seems to operate somewhat immediately to reform the life of a person.

In *Nonhangmun*, Suun stated, "Our Way is *muwi ihwa*. If any one keeps his heart and has the right energy, he will rule his nature, and he will become natural."³⁰) This statement of Suun signifies that if man will keep his mind with the right thought, and act in the good and right way, he will be united with the Ultimate Truth, and he will be an authentic, free, and moral personhood.

c) *The Five Rules of Practice*

O kwan (the five rules of practice) constitutes another important aspect of the spiritual training in Ch'ondogyo. *O kwan* is the most common method of spiritual training toward the complete union of man with God in Ch'ondogyo.³¹)

(1) Incantation

Incantation (*chumun*) is the constant repetition of the incantation formula as follows:

Chigi kumji wonwi taegang.
Si Ch'onju chokwa chōng. Yōngse pulmang mansaji
 (Ultimate Energy being here and now,
 I yearn for its great descent.
 Bearing (Serving) God, I have naturally become.
 Eternally not forgetting, I become aware of all).³²)

Ch'ondogyo teaches that through the constant repetition of the incantation one's mind would be open to the Truth and union with God.

(2) The Sincerity Rice

The Sincerity rice (*sōngmi*) is the offering of rice to the Church by saving one spoonful at each meal. It is a symbol of one's sincere faith and dedication of himself to God as well as a symbol of appreciation for one's life.

(3) Prayer

Prayer (*kido*) is an address to God for repentance and inspiration to live one's life anew in truth and righteousness. Prayer in Ch'ondogyo

30) "Nonhangmun," *Ch'ondogyo Kyōngjōn*, pp. 10-11.

31) Han, pp. 203-204.

32) Ch'oe Suun, "Chumun" (Incantation), *Ch'ondogyo Kyōngjōn*, p. 32.

is, however, essentially *simgo*, the “heart address.”³³) Thus, prayer in Ch’ondogyo does not require a verbal communication. It is addressed to God, who is within one’s own mind as the immanent reality.

(4) The Service Day

The service day (*sill*) is the observance of Sunday, on which, at eleven o’clock in the morning, the faithful gather together at the Church, pray to God, repent their mistakes, read the Scripture, and hear the sermon. Thereby, they purify their spirit and body, renew their faith, and develop their manhood into the higher dimension of union with God. The fellowship of brethren in the Church on that day also helps each person to grow toward stronger consciousness of the reality of salvation.

(5) The Pure Water

The pure water (*ch’ongsu*) is placing a bowl of clean and pure water on a table on every occasion of the Ch’ondogyo ceremonies. Especially, every morning Ch’ondogyo families perform this together with *simgo*. *Ch’ongsu* is the symbol of purity, which one’s heart should desire; for only with a pure and clean heart, can one achieve union with God.

Through these various methods of spiritual training and moral exercise, the Ch’ondogyoists seek to attain union with God, which is considered to be the realization of eternal life.

B. THE SALVATION AND DESTINY OF MAN: SOCIAL DIMENSION

The social dimension of the salvation and destiny of man can be considered in two aspects: the nation and the world. “Protecting the nation and securing peace for the people” and “the Kingdom of Heaven on earth” are the themes of the Ch’ondogyo eschatology in the social dimension.

1. *Protecting the Nation and Securing Peace for the People*

“Disease” and cure in Ch’ondogyo thought has social dimension as well as individual dimension. Disease in the social dimension means the immoral and selfish conduct of men, and the social unrest, chaos,

33) Han, p. 204.

and the sufferings of people. With the theme of *poguk anmin* (protecting the nation and securing peace for the people) Ch'ondogyo has expressed and displayed its deep concern for the well-being of the nation in some concrete manner, and has contributed a great deal for the improvement of the national destiny.

Beside his personal reason, in Suun's mind there were two basic concerns, which eventually caused him to seek and establish the new way. They were first, the serious moral depravity in the nation, and second, the danger of invasion from foreign powers.

Suun expressed the situation and his feeling as follows:

Our country is full of evil-doers, and therefore people cannot have even one peaceful day throughout the four seasons. This is a harmful destiny. We hear that the Western powers win whenever they fight, and gain whenever they attack, and that there is nothing that they cannot do. If the whole world were destroyed, there would be lamentation that would burst lips. Where will peace for the people come from? ³⁴⁾

In nineteenth century Korea, the political abuse of the ruling *yangban* class was extremely prevalent, and moral conditions were deteriorating everywhere. In relation to political corruption, the economic condition of the masses was also under severe stress. Suun seems to have heard that India was invaded by England, Philippines by Spain, and China by England, Germany, and France. And if such invasions continued, Suun conceived, Korea also might fall in the same destiny.

Hence, facing these two critical situations, Suun was asking where one could find a plan for saving the nation from both internal and external troubles. Suun's answer was that the *Ch'ondo* (Heavenly Way) or *Tonghak* alone is the authentic way of saving the nation and its people from their troubles and of securing peace for them. ³⁵⁾

As the supreme principle of saving the nation, Suun conceived the doctrine of *tonggwŏ ilch'e* (all men return to unity). ³⁶⁾ This principle stresses the necessity of unity among all men as the true way of salvation. Suun and other Ch'ondogyo leaders conceived many other principles such as "the unity of man and God" (*in nae ch'ŏn*) and "to treat man as God" (*sain yŏch'ŏn*) as the way to recreate the moral and social conditions of life with special concern for the equality, justice, and dignity of all men.

34) "P'odongmun," *Ch'ondogyo Kyŏngjŏn*, p. 5.

35) *Ibid.*, pp. 3 ff.

36) "Kyohun'ga," *Ibid.*, p. 82.

2. *The Kingdom of Heaven on Earth*

The salvation and destiny of man in the world-dimension is the expansion of the national dimension, as far as the basic principles are concerned. The ultimate and universal state of the salvation of mankind is called *chisang ch'ōnguk* in Ch'ōndogyo, which means "the Kingdom of Heaven on earth."

Ch'ōndogyo affirms that the reality of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth is possible through the new life of *tonggwi ilch'e* (all men return to unity) which is the doctrine of the unity, harmony, equality, and cooperation of all mankind. Han T'ae-yōn asserts that the ideas of *in nae Ch'ōn* (man is God) and *tonggwi ilch'e* are the highest democratic principles of recreating human society and the highest guiding principles of the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.³⁷⁾

Ch'ōndogyo applies the principle of *tonggwi ilch'e* especially to the economic life of mankind. Ch'ōndogyo believes that if mankind follows the principle of *tonggwi ilch'e*, it will overcome the dichotomy of individualistic capitalism and totalitarian communism, and will arrive at the ideal life of cooperation and unity, wherein the individual will seek his interest in harmony with the interest of the entire society and the society will protect the freedom and creative interest of the individual.

Ch'ōndogyo stresses that the principle of *tonggwi ilch'e* based upon the doctrine of the development of the Original Body of Life and the doctrine of *in nae Ch'ōn* alone is the unique ideology that is capable of building the world into one family of nations or one community of brotherhood. The united world community with permanent peace is the idea of "the Kingdom of Heaven on earth," which is the climax of Ch'ōndogyo eschatology.³⁸⁾

In conclusion, we can make the following remarks:

The eschatological ideas in Ch'ōndogyo are based upon the ontological and ethical ideas, such as *in nae Ch'ōn* (man is God) and *sain yōch'ōn* (treat men as God). Thus, there is a monistic logic within the structure of the Ch'ōndogyo thought.

The Ch'ōndogyo notion of man's salvation and destiny in both the individual and social dimensions is basically humanistic and autonomous. The realization of human salvation depends upon man's own

37) Han, pp. 79-81.

38) *Ibid.*, p. 219.

strength and effort. The eternal life and the Kingdom of Heaven is realized in this world, according to Ch'ondogyo. Such a humanistic and this-worldly eschatology void of theistic and transcendental perspective seems to lack dynamism. History witnesses that most of the dynamic religions have other-worldly eschatology. If this world is the ultimate Heaven or paradise and no place else, such a home of human destiny could hardly be accepted by all men universally. It seems reasonable to conceive that there must be some other place in the next life where the hope of comfort, joy, and peace for the humble suffering masses in this world must be fulfilled. The belief in the immortality and the eternal home of soul beyond this present life and world, and the idea of salvation by divine grace are the rich and powerful heritage of mankind which cannot be destroyed by any new ideology. The Ch'ondogyo eschatology seems to reduce the rich, transcendent, and profound meanings of eternity, divinity, and mystery to a too radical present, human, and mundane reality. Hence, the Ch'ondogyo eschatology appears very poor, weak, and dry.

Finally, we can observe some similarity between the Ch'ondogyo notion of mystical eschatology and that of some other Oriental thoughts such as Hinduism and Taoism. Union with the Reality is a common aspect of eschatology in these Eastern traditions.

IMPRESSIONS FROM TURKU

BY

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From Monday, 27th August 1973, until Saturday, 1st September, a study conference of the I.A.H.R. was held in Turku, Finland. Its theme was the methodology of the science of religion. The Organizing Committee had chosen nine topics; these have been announced and motivated in *Numen*, 19 (1972), 241/2. Two papers illustrated each topic. Papers were sent in advance to commentators and other participants, commentaries were distributed at the beginning of the sessions all being plenary. Scholars were present from Canada, Finland, the German Democratic Republic, the German Federal Republic, Great Britain, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, and the United States.

The following lines reflect personal experiences, and an evaluation *) attempted in a meeting of the Netherlands Society of Historians of Religions, October 1973.

Thanks to an admirable organization, Turku offered us an up-to-date picture of the field. For the first time a systematic confrontation took place between our discipline and others, foremost among them cultural anthropology. Immediate impressive results were not to be expected, but many a striking "creed" was pronounced and discussed. Appreciating the meeting, methodologists to the backbone stressed its fundamental character; others preferring a cautious phraseology stated: "there is more in methodology than we had thought of".

It is only natural that negative sounds were heard as well. The area which the conference aimed to cover was considered too large. This contributed to a certain lack of balance: history of religions (ancient

*) Participating were Drs. van Baal, van Baaren, Bleeker, Bouritius, Waardenburg and the present writer.

religions in particular) did not receive all attention it deserves and needs, and theories preponderated over applications.

Positive reactions, however, prevailed. There is a general wish for extension of contacts, and, in case of a second conference, for additional disciplines. There is unanimous gratitude to our hosts, skilful and generous, thoughtful and efficient. Of this last quality a final example: the proceedings are expected to appear in the summer of 1975. They will contain papers and commentaries in full, and essential points of the discussions.

THE STUDY CONFERENCE ON
“METHODOLOGY OF THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION”
IN TURKU, FINLAND, 1973

BY

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At the 12th International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions in Stockholm, in 1970, it was decided to hold a study conference on the methodology of the history of religions in Turku, Finland, in 1973. Turku suggested itself for several reasons. It has not only two chairs of Comparative Religion and has been the center of the study of the science of religion for the last ten years in Finland, but it had already held a symposium on methodological questions in 1970. Furthermore, there is the Donner Institute for Research in Religious and Cultural History (founded in 1957) with its excellent library, the symposia organized by the Institute, and the *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* in which the proceedings of these symposia are published. The Finnish Society for the Study of Comparative Religion publishes since 1965 the yearbook *Temenos* (“Studies in Comparative Religion presented by scholars in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden”). Thus, Scandinavian and in particular Finnish scholarship in the field of the history of religions assured a well prepared and fruitful meeting.

The organization of the conference was such that the participants could attend all the sessions, i.e., there was no division into sections with an overlapping schedule. On the whole there were nine sessions. In each of them two papers were presented, or rather summarized by the authors since the papers as such had been distributed at the beginning of the conference; they were followed by two to five commentaries; after that the papers and the comments were discussed. The topics of the nine sessions were the following (the names after each title indicate the main speakers):

- I. Oral and Written Documentation of Religious Tradition
 - a) Pre-literate Stages and Formation of the Canon in Book-Religions (H. Ringgren; M. Heerma van Voss)
 - b) Taxonomy and Source Criticism of Oral Tradition (J. Pentikäinen; A.-B. Rooth)
 - c) Literary Source Criticism (J. Kitagawa; K. Rudolph)
- II. The Future of the Phenomenology of Religion
 - a) Evaluation of Previous Methods (H. Biezais; C. Colpe)
 - b) Religio-ecological Approach (Å. Hultkrantz; S. Bjerke)
 - c) Religio-anthropological Approach (U. Bianchi; M. E. Spiro)
- III. Religion as Expressive Culture
 - a) Theories Concerning the Ritual Process (L. Honko; J. L. Peacock)
 - b) The Language of Religion (J. Barr; J. Waardenburg)
 - c) Depth Structures of Religious Expression (J. van Baal; K. Goldammer).

These titles reflect not only the current concerns of scholars of comparative religion in all countries but also those approaches that are, so to speak, the specialities of Scandinavian scholars.

The number of active participants was limited to fifty. On the whole, the conference was attended by c. ninety scholars from the following countries: Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, Finland, German Democratic Republic, Great Britain, Holland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, and the U.S.A.

Those who came to Turku with the expectation that presently confused methodological issues will be clarified certainly did not see their expectations fulfilled. As one participant put it, much of the discussions sounded like a confusion of tongues. There are, for instance, many key terms which are used almost by every scholar in a different sense. Of course, this is nothing new in comparative religion, but it becomes particularly obvious in a gathering like this. Maybe more intense discussions could at least have eliminated some misunderstandings that were bound to arise from such a situation.

What some call a confusion of tongues in the field of methodology, is welcomed by others as the necessary flexibility in the approach to the study of religions. Since religions are such complex phenomena it would not only be impossible but also undesirable to declare one

or several methods as *the* method or methods by which they have to be investigated. Thus, the disagreement over methods in the study of religions can be regarded as rather healthy since it ensures that religions are being viewed from many different perspectives and thereby understood better and better.

Another feature which was conspicuous at the conference was the recurrence of ideas that have been expressed before in one way or another. Prof. Kitagawa spoke of a "re-arranging of old furniture". This confirms the conviction expressed by E. Sharpe in his comment "Typology and Phenomenological Method" that "the scholar's scope for methodological novelty, though theoretically unlimited, in practice may be really very limited indeed". Is one to conclude from this that study conferences on methodology are superfluous since in the last analysis there is nothing new under the sun of religio-historical scholarship? An answer in the affirmative seems to suggest itself when one considers another warning or complaint that was voiced by quite a number of participants. I am referring here to those scholars who are impatient with theoretical discussions and who urge their colleagues to devote themselves rather to the *praxis* of research. Although it is true that new methods and approaches do not appear at every gathering of scholars, and although it must be agreed that theorizing without any practice is futile, a study conference on methodology does fulfil an eminently necessary function. First of all, what may be old furniture to the one, may be not quite as familiar to the other, e.g., to those who are relatively new in the field, or whose methodological background differs from that of other scholars. Secondly, much of the progress in any scholarly work consists of presenting known facts in a new perspective, re-arranging them, as it were, and thereby opening the way to new discoveries. Finally, the necessity of theoretical reflections should not be disputed any more after all that has been said about unconscious or unacknowledged presuppositions under whose influence so much work in the study of religion has been and is being done.

As there is no agreement with regard to terminology, methodology, etc., there is no agreement either in the answer to the question: What is the science of religion or history of religions or *Religionswissenschaft*? The traditional characterization of *Religionswissenschaft* as a historical discipline was re-emphasized by some but questioned by

others. It would seem that there is some misunderstanding of what is intended by the term history in this connection. But then, it would be dragging in old furniture if the scope of "history" of religions were re-discussed here again. In any case, to say that the emphasis of historical research *vs.* the search for a-historical essences (or patterns or *ratio*, depending on one's preference) should be forgotten once and for all in reference to the fact that other *Forschungsrichtungen*, e.g. Lévi-Strauss' structuralism, are at the same time anti-historical and anti-phenomenological in every sense of the latter term, solves nothing.

In summary, the conference in Turku provided manifold stimuli for the ongoing work in the study of religion. Nobody will have left without having profitted from it, and being grateful for this excellent opportunity to exchange ideas. And even though the time for discussions within the sessions was not always long enough to permit the clarification of the various issues, a beginning has been made which led or will lead to further talks, either in private or at some future meeting. Prof. Honko's hope that Turku "will offer suitable surroundings for an academic meeting the importance of which will hardly remain merely academic" (*Temenos*, 8, 1972, p. 6) was certainly fulfilled. Thanks to the able organizers of the conference and to Finnish hospitality, personal contacts among the participants made this meeting a fruitful one on the scholarly as well as on the human level.

COMMUNICATION

COLLOQUE INTERNATIONAL SUR „LE SACRÉ”

Un Colloque international sur le Sacré a eu lieu à l'Université de Rome au mois de janvier 1974; c'était la 14^{ème} rencontre sur la problématique de la démythisation prévue par l'Institut d'Etudes philosophique (Rome) et le Centre international d'Etudes humanistes. La première eut lieu en 1961 avec la participation des savants les plus représentatifs d'Europe (Bultmann, Daniélou, Kerényi, Ricoeur, Gadamer...).

La série des rencontres dont les Actes comprennent 16 volumes (Démythisation et Image, Herméneutique et Tradition, Mythe et Foi, Le Témoignage... pour citer les plus significatives) s'est conclue avec le dernier volume sur *Démythisation et Idéologie et La critique de la Démythisation* de E. Castelli (ed. Française, Aubier).

Le Président du Colloque sur le Sacré E. Castelli a posé la distinction entre „histoire sacrée” et „histoire du sacré”, ce qui a permis une orientation dans l'histoire des religions tout à fait nouvelle, surtout pour ce qui regarde l'histoire du Christianisme. Une distinction qui est la seule capable de démythiser les aspects inauthentiques du problème et en même temps de démythiser les conditions de vie qui dans une société technologique empêchent l'écoute du transcendant.

Ont pris part aux travaux du Colloque, parmi les autres: R. Panikkar, G. Vahanian, H. Bouillard, J. Ellul, P. Ricoeur, U. Bianchi, V. Mathieu, P. Prini, A. Vergote, L. Cardet, J. Ladrière, D. M. MacKinnon, et d'autres spécialistes européens et américains.

ERSCHEINUNGSFORMEN DES RELIGIOSEN PLURALISMUS

VON

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Die Begegnung der Religionen — heute in einem vordem unbekannten Ausmass ermöglicht und verwirklicht — hat die Vielzahl religiöser Erscheinungsformen, den Pluralismus der Religionen, in voller Deutlichkeit erkennen und zugleich zu einem wesentlichen Faktor der geistigen Gegenwartslage werden lassen. Zu dieser Erweiterung des religionsgeographischen Horizontes ist sukzessive diejenige des religionshistorischen getreten. Sie ermöglicht die Einsicht in Wandlungen, denen jede Religion als geschichtliche Grösse unterliegt. Das Thema des religionsgeschichtlichen Wandels hängt aufs engste mit dem des religiösen Pluralismus zusammen. Denn hierbei handelt es sich um eine Vielzahl religiöser Erscheinungen, die im geschichtlichen Ablauf Gestalt gewinnt, also um eine Pluralität im Vertikalen.

Der Religionsforschung bietet sich zur höchst aktuell gewordenen Aufgabe einer systematischen Erfassung von Pluralismus und Wandel als sachgemäss eine Methode dar, die als religionsgeschichtliche Typik bezeichnet werden kann. Es handelt sich hierbei um eine sehr enge Verflechtung zweier traditioneller Forschungsrichtungen, der religionsgeschichtlichen und der religionsphänomenologischen. Nur die Verbindung beider Forschungsbereiche wird der gebotenen systematischen Zueinanderordnung analoger Erscheinungen des Wandels in verschiedenen Religionen und des Pluralismus zu verschiedenen Zeiten gerecht.

Wenn unter diesem Gesichtspunkt Fakten zu konstatieren sind, so ist es deutlich, dass sich deren Dokumentation mit derjenigen der herkömmlichen Phänomenologie darin trifft, dass sie eine nahezu unendliche Aufgabe bildet, die in jedem Falle geeignet ist, neue Themenstellungen anzuregen.

Mit meinem Buche *Begegnung und Wandel der Religionen* (Düsseldorf-Köln 1971) habe ich eine religionsgeschichtliche Typik gegeben, die sich zunächst den pluralistischen Erscheinungsformen widmet. Diese reichen von den religiös noch wenig verbindlichen Konvergenzen

und Affinitäten über interreligiöse Strömungen, Begegnungen und Beeinflussungen bis zu Mischreligionen und zum Religionswechsel grösserer Gruppen, der im Zusammenhang des religiösen Pluralismus von vorrangiger Bedeutung ist gegenüber dem individuellen Konvertiten und den Motiven seines Übertritts zu einer anderen Religion.

Dieser Religionswechsel führt, wenn es sich bei der aufnehmenden Religion um eine Neustiftung handelt, zu einer Steigerung der pluralistischen Situation. Eine solche liegt jedoch weder im Interesse von Neustiftungen noch von traditionellen Religionen. Ihre Intentionen bei der Gewinnung von Proselyten richten sich in jedem Falle auf eine Reduktion des Pluralismus zu ihren Gunsten, und sie erstreben dessen Überwindung, wenn sie weltreligiöse Ziele verfolgen. Damit ist Religionswechsel eine Erscheinung, die überleitet zur Thematik der Bewältigung des religiösen Pluralismus.

Diese ist keineswegs einseitig mit dem Bestreben verfolgt worden, fremde Religionen zu überwinden, sei es missionarisch oder machtpolitisch. Vielmehr weisen die historisch realisierten Möglichkeiten der Bewältigung des religiösen Pluralismus eine Skala von Erscheinungsformen auf, die von bewusster und gewollter Isolierung bis zur religiös indifferenten Toleranz reicht.

Der geschichtliche Wandel innerhalb eigenständiger Religionen ist einmal zu beobachten, wenn man die Religionen als komplexe Grössen auf den Stadien ihres historischen Weges verfolgt. Er ist aber auch zu erkennen an signifikanten Phänomenen jeder einzelnen Religion, vor allem am Gottesglauben, am Kult und an der Ethik.

Wie es jeder Religion aufgegeben ist, sich mit dem Faktum des religiösen Pluralismus auseinanderzusetzen, so auch mit demjenigen des religionshistorischen Wandels. Auch hier lassen sich bestimmte Typen der Bewältigung dieses Wandels aufzeigen. Ihre Pole sind einerseits die restlose Negation tatsächlicher Veränderungen, das beharrliche Festhalten an einer im Prinzip statischen Sichtweise, und andererseits die absolute Bejahung ständigen Wandels und des Bemühens um Angleichung an die jeweilige Situation. Zwischen diesen Polen liegt die lebendige Hineinnahme des religiösen Erbes in eine Gegenwart, deren nicht nur zeitlicher, sondern auch qualitativer Abstand von den Ursprüngen einer Religion erkannt und als die stets neu gestellte Aufgabe empfunden wird, im Wandel das Wesentliche zu bewahren.

RELIGION AND GEOGRAPHY¹⁾

Impulses for a new dialogue between
Religionswissenschaftlern *) and geographers

BY

MANFRED BÜTTNER

Fundamental insights regarding the reciprocal relationships between religion and the environment, based on field research among the Herrnhuter.²⁾

A. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

When Max Weber, E. Troeltsch and other scholars in the 1920's drew the attention of the scientific world to the influence which the religions exerted on their economic and social environment, they not only created an impact on sociology of religion, *Religionswissenschaft*, and theology, but also introduced a turning point in the geography of religion; for in that field the preoccupation till this time had been with exactly the *opposite* relationship, that is, with the determination of religion by the geographic environment.

Since that time all geographers of religion practice their profession in the spirit of Max Weber, or in the "new" spirit, which arose after the First World War.

But the time has now come to consider whether this kind of "one-

*) *Religionswissenschaft* in English is translated either as "History of Religions" or "Comparative Study of Religions". Neither is a precise equivalent of the German term. "Science of Religion" also has connotations which are not implied in *Religionswissenschaft*. Therefore, the original term is retained throughout the article. [Trans.]

1) The main ideas of the following exposition were first presented in Bochum (June 1970) in my paper to the colloquium formally admitting me to the faculty of the University (*Habilitationskolloquium*). The theme of that paper was "Herrnhut as a type for group settlements moulded by religion". Die hier vorliegende Übersetzung ins Englische wurde von Herrn Ens (Ottawa) unter der Betreuung durch Herrn Prof. Dr. Pummer vorgenommen. Ich danke diesen Herren sehr für ihre große Mühe.

2) With support from the University of Bochum and the DFG I am presently (assisted by many coworkers) carrying out a larger religio-geographical research among the Herrnhuter and Waldensians.

sided" geography of religion is still adequate for the present state of the sciences as a whole. In other disciplines (including geography itself) there have been some developments in recent decades; and there are increasing indications that in geography of religion (which is particularly dependent on its neighbouring disciplines for its methods) a new direction, beyond the already visible tendencies (cf. n. 17) would not only be sensible but even necessary.

A brief survey of the history of the geography of religion will show clearly how this discipline has always moved with the prevailing scientific trends. On the basis of this background the conclusions which the geographer of religion of today has to draw and their implications for a dialogue with the theologian and the *Religionswissenschaftler* will be discussed. This discussion will be illustrated with references to studies in the geography of religion which I have just completed among the Herrnhuter.

B. HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE GEOGRAPHY OF RELIGION³⁾

1. The geography of religion had its beginnings in the century of the Reformation, that is, in the time period when geography as a whole (as also the other sciences) changed from a philosophy pursued in the Greek spirit to a theologically oriented discipline. It is true that already at that time the following definition, still applicable today, was used: geography of religion is the preoccupation of the geographer with religion! However, since at that time geography as a whole was done only by theologians and our subject did not have its own genuine geographical method or objective (this only begins with Keckermann), it was the theological task of the geography of that time to point out the workings of God in the world. Consequently these early geographers (insofar as they occupied themselves with man) were especially concerned to portray the spread of Christianity in the world. As anthropogeographers they wanted to clarify God's acts of salvation with and for man (*Providentia specialis*), and thereby they became geographers of religion.⁴⁾ According to the understanding of that time, these special

3) Cf. my writings in the bibliography, particularly the *Habilitationsschrift* of 1973.

4) It is thus not true that the geography of religions has developed out of cultural geography. In the 15th century geography was mainly mathematical geography, which however could only demonstrate the *Creatio*, or at most the

acts of God took place exclusively within the context of the Christian Church, and consequently, there existed in practice "only" an ecclesiastical geography of religion, a Christian geography of culture.⁵⁾

2. The second era of our subject begins at the point at which Keckermann emancipated geography from theology. At that point something like a neutral position became evident also in the geography of religion. For the first time an attempt was made systematically to subdivide the various religions as they differ from Christianity, and to describe their areas of distribution (Bertius), thereby making a beginning of what we might today call "description of the spatial distribution of religions". The first works about non-Christian religions, in which direct reference to Christianity no longer occurs, make their appearance (Varenius), although the original theological (or ecclesiastical) inclination of the geography of religion is still recognizable. The actual aim of works in the geography of religion of this time was to determine which religions our missionaries found in the various regions and how the mission progressed among them.

3. Only with the coming of the enlightenment the radical turn which marks the general trend in the 18th century sciences appeared in the geography of religion. The third era thus began and with it the final separation between theology and natural science.

In this period the ideas of Montesquieu and Voltaire above all provided the direction for our subject and continued to do so into the 19th century. All at once it became important, with complete disregard of what had once been the task of the geographer of religion, to assess how far religion was determined by its environment, particularly by

Providentia generalis. But, since the interest of theologians after the Reformation increasingly shifted toward the *Providentia specialis*, the geographer of the 16th century was forced to pay attention also to the human element. (Cf. those of my writings specifically referred to in n. 3 above.)

Sebastian Münster was the first one to do this and to expand his geography accordingly. I, therefore, designate him the first full geographer. Kaspar Peucer then laid the theoretical basis for a "human geography" as required by theological considerations, and the resulting extension of mathematical geography developed it into full blown geography.

5) For Neander the whole of geography is in practice nothing more than "church history from a geographical perspective". That is, he goes one step further than Peucer.

climate. Attempts were even made (in the sweep of the rising materialistic currents) to explain the essential nature of various religions, especially that of Christianity, in terms of their respective geographical environments. The works of Friedrich (1917) and Gebel (1922) are probably the best known ones from this period of the geography of religion.

4. The major turning point came in the 1920's, and the fourth era began (even though its development was delayed for a short time by the National Socialist era in Germany⁶).

Materialism, and with it the "natural" explanation of all spiritual phenomena, had run its course. The time was ripe for a fundamental change of direction. Max Weber was probably the first to take the opposite position in an encompassing scheme and to show the influence of religion on the social and economic structures.⁷)

In so doing he provided the geography of religion with the key for the period that followed. This does not mean that all present geographers of religion are somehow "students" of Max Weber, or that they follow directly his ideas, but it indicates the trend which has permeated the whole of science since those days, and which has also won its way in the geography of religion.

But now the question arises, is the geography of religion, as it is currently pursued, still adequate for the latest trend? I maintain: no! It is time to strike a new direction!

Not only in the neighbouring disciplines, but also in geography itself, the concept of one-way relationships has been abandoned some time ago, and increasing attention is given to the study of the reciprocal aspects of the particular network of relations.

There is another consideration. Fickeler still maintained: what the other disciplines which are concerned with religion (like history of religions, sociology of religion, theology, etc.), do, or have done, does

6) During the time of the Third Reich the deterministic school (anachronistically) was embarrassingly emphasized. See for example in this respect the typical work of Frick in 1943.

7) Max Weber, however, only slowly and hesitatingly decided in favour of this turning point. In his early essays he still attempted to explain a surprising number of religious notions (for example, Christian humility) on the basis of the environment (including climate). The breakthrough only came toward the end of his life.

not interest me! I am a geographer and develop my own system of concepts and carry on research according to my own methods!⁸⁾

That kind of attitude is outdated by now. Instead the following position is increasingly gaining currency: we geographers cannot determine what the geography of religion is (or should be), and set its limits by ourselves; that has to be discussed and worked out in dialogue with neighbouring disciplines (cf. Sopher's response to Zimpel), as has been the case for some time with social geography, economic geography, etc. That is, we begin with a problem-oriented attitude and ask: what contribution can we as geographers make (on the basis of the empirical methods currently accepted in geography) together with all the other disciplines studying religion,⁹⁾ and what stimulation might this produce for our somewhat stagnating discipline?

C. PRESENT SCIENTIFIC TRENDS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GEOGRAPHER OF RELIGION

It can be said at the outset, that in all disciplines one no longer speaks of unilateral relationships. Always, according to the current view, whenever something acts on something else (and thereby gives rise to a relationship), one can observe a reaction. The time is past when this reaction was ignored.¹⁰⁾

In geography too we see more and more the reciprocity of relationships, both in cultural geography (social geography, urban geography, etc.) and in physical geography.¹¹⁾

For the geographer of religion this means that also in this division of the discipline one should no longer consider one-way relationships and try instead to determine the reciprocal aspects of the network of relationships (as Fickeler had already demanded in theory but had not yet followed through in practice.) That is, one should investigate, as a

8) Fickeler admittedly was considered an outsider by geographers; but on this point he could count on the agreement of practically all the geographers of his time.

9) The fact that relatively few advances have been made in the geography of religion is due mainly to the lack of contact with neighbouring disciplines.

10) Unless I am mistaken it was in physics where this observation was first made.

11) This consideration of reciprocal relationships has meanwhile become so general that the mere mention of something so self-evident provokes astonishment. Only for the geography of religion such considerations are still new, and hence open for discussion.

kind of dialectical supplement to what is currently being done in the geography of religion (my concept of "synthetic geography of religion" derives from this¹²)), the manner in which the reaction manifests itself; i.e. how the formative influence which religion exerts (via the social-economic structure, etc.) on the settlement or even on the landscape in return influences religion. (Cf. Sopher, who explicitly emphasizes that this kind of research, even when it has the nature of *Religionswissenschaft*, nevertheless belongs in the field of geography of religion. See below.)

It is obvious that this kind of enterprise is only possible through team work with all the other disciplines working in religion. It is equally obvious that out of such teamwork new impulses for the somewhat stagnating geography of religion may arise.

In order that the above go beyond mere theory, my geography of religion researches in progress shall serve as an example how such a new field study, planned according to the method of "synthetic geography of religion", might look, if the following points are observed:

1. We are geographers!
2. What contribution can we make, in teamwork with *Religionswissenschaftlern*, etc., to the study of the complex of religion?
3. What impulses may result for all the disciplines working with religion?

12) In my opinion the third stage of the dialectical movement at which science as a whole (including geography!) has meanwhile arrived, is about to be incorporated into geography of religion. (There can be no talk of a return to the milieu theory.) The development can be sketched as follows:

First stage (thesis): The "explanation" of religion; a one-sided presentation of religion as determined by its environment. (The *religionswissenschaftlich* era of the geography of religions)

Second stage (antithesis): One-sided study of the opposite; researches into the moulding influence of religion on its (social, economic, etc.) environment to the point of shaping the settlement and landscape. (geographical era of the geography of religions)

Third stage (synthesis): Research into and demonstration of the reciprocal aspects of relationships. (For the pattern of research which I have suggested for the study of these reciprocal relationships see Section E. Cf. also my essay "Ein neuer Wendepunkt in der Religionsgeographie?" See bibliography.)

D. THE RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN RELIGION ¹³⁾ AND
GEOGRAPHIC ENVIRONMENT ¹⁴⁾ AMONG THE HERRNHUTER

(The perspective of the "synthetic" geography of religion. ¹⁵⁾)

1. *The moulding of the settlement or landscape by religion*

Today's geographer is an empiricist and feels most competent in those areas which can be spatially (i.e. in the landscape) grasped and cartographically portrayed. Consequently his approach differs from that of the historian of religions (*Religionswissenschaftler*). He does not begin with religion (regardless of what is understood by that term, cf. n. 41 below), but rather begins with the landscape, that is, with anthro-geographical facts visible in it, such as settlement, transportation routes, population, etc. He is interested first of all in these facts, not in religion. Only after he has empirically understood the landscape, does he raise questions about the underlying spiritual forces which gave rise to the shape or character of the existing landscape. If he now determines that these form-giving forces are of a religious nature, then (and only then) he has become a geographer of religion. ¹⁶⁾ Thus, the cultural geographer in Asia, for example, the classical land of religions, always is (and has to be) much more of a geographer of religion than one who studies Europe or the United States from a culture-geographical point of view (cf. n. 2 above). Similarly, the geography of the developing countries, including those of East Asia, always is particularly strongly oriented towards geography of religion (even when it conceives of itself as being "merely" economic geography or social geography). ¹⁷⁾

Applied to the specific case of "a geography of religion of the Herrnhuter Brethren", the preceding suggests that we begin with the

13) It is obviously not the religion as such which exercises a direct influence on its environment; the relationships are always through the (religiously moulded) group of people, originating in the spiritual attitude of these people and determining the settlement, and through it the landscape, via the social, economic, etc., structures.

14) By environment is meant not only the physio-geographical but also the socio-economic environment.

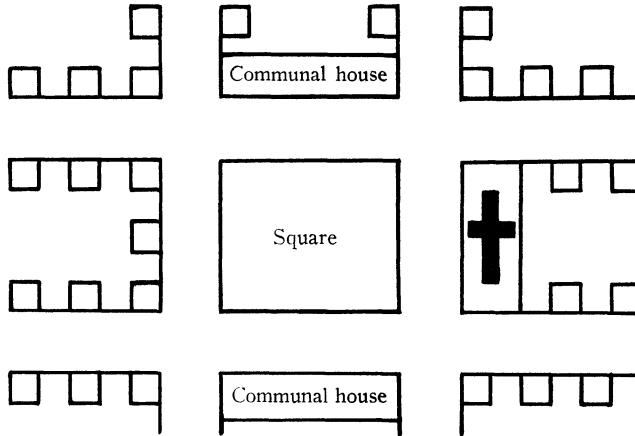
15) For the concept "synthetic geography of religion" cf. n. 12.

16) It is important precisely for the non-geographer to give this fact the kind of attention which it deserves.

17) Cf. the trend-setting works of Sievers, Wirth, Zimpel, etc. (See bibliography.)

settlement itself and then ask: What reasons led to this particular type of settlement? ¹⁸⁾

I begin therefore with a description of the Herrnhuter settlement type. ¹⁹⁾ It looks as follows: ²⁰⁾



¹⁸⁾ Let me emphasize that this part of the research is still definitely carried out in the spirit of traditional (Max Weber-oriented) geography of religion. What I have called "synthetic geography of religion" only begins at the moment in which the feedback is also considered and the religion-environment relationship is seen as a process.

¹⁹⁾ With respect to the religiously determined settlement type the following point is to be noted: On the basis of my researches to date I have come to the conclusion that there are basically only two different types. There is first of all the *closed* settlement, which is found mainly at monasteries and in places where the inhabitants seek above all to live their faith in a contemplative (inward-directed) manner.

Secondly, there is the *open settlement*, as represented especially by the Herrnhuter. It corresponds to the outward-directed mission and fighter spirit of this religious group.

It should be pointed out however, that correspondence does not necessarily mean a causal relationship. As geographers of religion we are concerned with geography as a discipline that belongs to the humanities and not to the natural sciences. As Schaffer has said, under different circumstances various forces can bring about similar forms (cf. his work of 1970).

With respect to these forces, I think we should fundamentally abandon Fickeler's method of dividing religion into ethos and cult and then to say that the landscape-moulding forces derive only from the cultic components.

But the direction, taken by *Religionswissenschaftler* who (following Otto) begin with the concept of the *holy* (and ignore all other factors), is in need of revision. (As far as I can see *Religionswissenschaftler*, when they turn to questions

A large square forms the centre of the settlement. (Cf. n. 22.) On one side of it, generally the east side, there is the house of prayer (church building), flanked on the left and the right by large, long, barrack-like buildings. The rest of the area is occupied by smaller houses.

Streets lead in straight lines from this square. Thus the whole settle-

in geography of religion, consider primarily the factor of the holy. See for example the pertinent items in the *religionswissenschaftlich* literature from Otto through Glasenapp and up to Heiler, etc.) As is illustrated by the example of the Herrnhuter, a given area may become significant for the geography of religion not only by virtue of its prominence as a holy place (regardless of precisely what is understood by that term). Naturally there are whole cultic landscapes, especially in Asia, which can only be understood and explained from the point of view of "holiness". Places of pilgrimage, sacred groves, etc., also can only be approached in this manner by the geography of religion. But modern geography of religion cannot confine itself to such matters.

In the case of settlements of religious groups (of particular interest to contemporary geographers of religion) matters are fundamentally different!

For the Herrnhuter for example the house of prayer (i.e. the "church") is not a sacred place. It is the meeting place for worship, but other celebrations are also held in it just as in any secular building. On the other hand, in a certain sense everything is sacred for the Brethren, including the place of work; because that is as much a place for "the service of God" as is the house of prayer.

In any case, the geographer, as empiricist, is less concerned about the problem of holiness, and rather inquires simply: What place does the church building, the community hall, etc. occupy in the settlement pattern or in the functional structure of the Herrnhuter community? Or: where do the workers, etc. come from the Herrnhuter enterprises? Do they commute from a distance? What are the transportation routes like? Do the businesses operate profitably? And what factors play a role in all of this, only religious ones? (On this point see below.)

In my opinion the most helpful division would be:

a) *direct* landscape-moulding influences

b) *indirect* landscape-moulding influences.

The direct influences would include those determined by the cult, the concept of holiness, etc.

An indirect religious influence on the landscape is one in which the system of interrelations/network of relationships acts via the intermediary social, occupational and economic structures, etc., as is the case with the Herrnhuter. In Islam, too, indirect influences play a major role. (Consider for example the religiously moulded economic spirit). Wherever structures for social and medical services are being built, an indirect religious influence manifests itself. In the case of *Bethel*, a religiously moulded "landscape" or settlement arose without any noticeable direct influences (emanating from the cult or from some concept of the holy). Other structures, such as educational institutions, convalescent homes, etc. erected by religious communities also belong in this category.

20) In the setting up of a type we are dealing with an abstraction; but the actual circumstances for example in *Herrnhut*, *Gnadau*, *Kleinwelka* or *Königsfeld*, (settlements which most clearly embody the type) show only very slight deviations from the ideal form.

ment is planned with the focus on this central point. Because of this settlement pattern the Herrnhut communities stand out clearly from their surroundings even in a superficial study of an ordnance map.²¹⁾

However, it is not only the plan of the Herrnhut settlement that is the same all over, but one also sees practically identical houses, built in the same or at least strikingly similar architectural style (although with different material from time to time), regardless of whether one is in Herrnhut in Oberlausitz, in Königsfeld in the Black Forest, or in Neuwied on the Rhine, and regardless of whether or not the houses fit into the landscape. I am told that this principle also applies for the settlements overseas. Whether in Greenland or Labrador, Surinam or South Africa, the Brethren everywhere have recreated their native settlement, which strictly speaking suited its surroundings and the spiritual character of the Brethren only in the place of their origin (and only in earlier times).²²⁾

What then are the background, formative forces, which manifest (or manifested) themselves in this settlement plan?

When we present the genesis of the Herrnhuter Brethren not from a theological or church-historical point of view but from the perspective of the geography of religion, that is, when we determine what the spiritual/intellectual forces were which gave rise to such a settlement pattern, we can say the following:²³⁾ Count Zinzendorf, who was

21) Naturally a planned settlement with a network of streets running perpendicular to each other in itself does not yet represent any peculiarity of the Herrnhuter settlement. A settlement made according to plan generally has its streets laid out in such a grid structure and thereby distinguishes itself from neighbouring settlements. It is only in connection with what follows that the particular moulding of the settlement pattern through the (religiously determined) spiritual attitude of the Herrnhuter reveals itself. (Cf. the reference in n. 19 to varying forces being able to produce identical forms.)

22) Of course they had to conform to the building materials available in the vicinity. In spite of this, it is striking that Herrnhuter settlements strongly resemble each other not only in the settlement plan, but even in the building style of the houses. They succeeded time and again, in spite of the variety of materials used, to manifest the same "spirit". Even today it is possible, regardless of where one is, to recognize a Brethren settlement immediately. Almost invariably it is clearly distinguished from its environment. (In Königsfeld, for example, one is even today reminded more of Herrnhut and the Oberlausitz than one is of the Black Forest.)

23) The literature about the Brethren community is very extensive and even for the theologian, unless he is a specialist in the history of the Brethren, difficult

raised in Halle under August Hermann Francke and there came in contact with the enlightenment and with pietism, experienced a conversion under the influence of the dialectic between reason and revelation. In connection with this experience (and tied to his activist, extrovert, "outward-directed" character) he developed the missionary soldier idea (especially after making contact with the Moravian and Bohemian exiles), which eventually dominated his entire outlook.²⁴) Already as a young converted student in Halle, but even more as the later leader of the Brethren, he advocated this concept: Surely, the point is not to live one's faith quietly and with an inward-directed peace (as was the wish for example of many Pietists, most monks, and also of the Bohemian Brethren who had been driven underground in the 17th and 18th centuries); no, a Christian must go into the world; he may not content himself with his own salvation but rather, as a "soldier of Christ" he must pass on the glad tidings; he must (in the words of the geographers of that time) assist in the realization of the *Providentia specialis*. His motto consequently was: Not an inward-directed closing off but an outward-directed opening up.²⁵)

Thus it came to a transformation of function, to an "opening up" of the refugee congregation, which had gathered together in the lands of Zinzendorf²⁶), and whose primary concern was to find asylum, a safe place in which they could peacefully live their inward-directed faith. Parallel with this theological transformation of function came a social and an economic one. It became self-evident that the congregation

to survey, let alone master. (In the appended bibliography I have mentioned the most important works.)

24) In my theological doctoral thesis I have worked out in detail how Zinzendorf, as a result of the causal mechanical shock (in connection with his particular character of course) arrived precisely at his Christ-monism, while among other contemporaries the conversion experience often led in another direction.

25) For our researches as geographers, the details of the development of the missionary-soldier spirit among the Herrnhuter and the part possibly played in this development by members other than Zinzendorf himself, are unimportant. It is similarly unimportant whether the presently existing settlement pattern first arose in Herrnhut itself or in Herrnhag. What is decisive is simply this: this "spirit" is suddenly there and with it a suitable social, economic, and occupational structure, settlement pattern, etc., as well as the goal of all striving.

26) The Count made his properties in Oberlausitz available and there provided asylum for various religious refugees (from Bohemia, Moravia, but also from Silesia, etc.) This ethnic mixture quickly developed into a unity of the kind which seeks its own in the world.

needed to be tightly organized. A small Christian force can operate the more effectively and (as we would say today) achieve maximum results with a minimum of expense, only when the externals are properly ordered.

Various corps (groups) were formed, for example the corps of the single brethren, the single sisters, the widows, etc., each corps having its leader, who was also responsible for providing pastoral care. This arrangement was in accordance with the principle that basically women minister to women and men minister to men.

Since this religious community (officially it calls itself a brotherhood—*Brüdergemeine*) consisted only of artisans,²⁷⁾ (farmers were hardly represented) an economic structure based on the occupational structure, developed by itself. The community was supported by the products of its workers, most of which were produced in enterprises owned by the Brethren themselves and sold on the outside.²⁸⁾

A large portion of the Brethren, however, then prepared themselves theologically for missionary service, which was carried out in the immediate surrounding (home mission) or in the non-Christian world (foreign mission).²⁹⁾ This became, so to speak, their main calling; the old occupation was given up, although it could be taken up again in case of emergency.

This outward-directed missionary fighter spirit, which influenced the social, occupational and economic structure, manifested itself in the

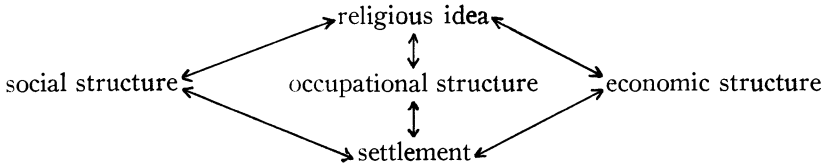
27) The Herrnhuter are, as far as I know, the only religious community consisting, at least originally, only of artisans. That explains (quite independently of their religious activity, cf. the analogous situation with respect to building styles in n. 22) their mobility.

It is highly questionable whether a farming community, in spite of religious activation, would ever have developed such a strong outward-directed activity. (Compare in this connection the Waldensians who in comparison with the Herrnhuter are relatively passive!) Farmers, under the influence of similar religious experiences, are generally intellectually, spiritually (and also physically) less movable; they are "tied to the soil".

28) The consequences for the surrounding community were partly positive, but also partly devastatingly negative! The high quality of the Herrnhuter products upset the old economic balance of the "environment" and in many cases led to bankruptcy of competing businesses in neighbouring localities. Boycotts and similar actions were frequently the result. For further details see the writings of Uttendörfer in the bibliography.

29) The first bishop of the Herrnhuter congregation however, was, like Paul, an artisan.

settlement. It is debatable, whether the theologically based spiritual attitude in itself produced this settlement pattern, or whether its influence was only an indirect one via the social structure, etc. See the sketch below. (Cf. also n. 19 above.)



The large square in the middle is an expression of openness. (It serves neither as a market place nor as *Residenzplatz*.*) Here the whole congregation gathers (or gathered) on all kinds of occasions (frequently more than once a day) in order to prepare itself internally for its “outward-directed” task. (Worship service in the square or in the hall, farewell service for missionaries accompanied by brass choir, departure of the produce wagons, corporate preparation for service, etc.) In contrast to monks, the orientation of the Brethren is “outward-directed”; therefore, their settlement is fundamentally different from the inward-directed monastery surrounded by its wall. (Cf. n. 19 and 30.) The barrack-like buildings around the square constitute the proper housing at the right location for those whose main calling is to be “soldiers of Christ” and who are organized into corps. The “supply troops” live in normal smaller houses, somewhat removed from the prayer hall and stretching out in all directions. In the context of the whole plan of the settlement they manifest to some extent the thesis: we are supporting personnel, we live around the centre. The centre of our thinking and of our action is Jesus Christ and the proclamation of his salvation!

Seen in this way, the place at which Christ is being honoured belongs in the middle and his “army”, which is preparing for outward-directed service quite naturally forms the first ring immediately surrounding this centre.³⁰⁾

*) A *Residenzstadt* is the seat of the court of a nobleman. The square facing the court is called *Residenzplatz*. [Trans.]

30) It is not denied that my present attempt to interpret the visible geographical facts as an expression of the intellectual-spiritual forces behind them is subjective. However, since the geography of religion is a discipline within the humanities, it is hardly possible that it be otherwise. Objective proofs for the correctness of conclusions are more difficult to obtain (just as for example in

So much for the background forces which formed the Herrnhuter settlement type. Having in this manner (abstracted from the various individual settlements of the Brethren) determined in principle the

history) than they are in the natural sciences. (Even Max Weber's comprehensive attempt at an interpretation cannot be proven as correct by means of objective criteria.)

It is important, in my opinion, to attempt an interpretation, to track down background forces and not to content oneself merely with a description of visible surface matters. (Compare in this connection Lautensach's writing about the Mormons. This kind of presentation, while certainly interesting to the culture geographer, remains unsatisfactory for the geographer of religion.)

Even though I cannot prove that my interpretation is correct, I would nevertheless like to make the attempt here to refute possible objections to it. My interpretations could be opposed at the following points:

1. Why should the church building not be located in the centre of the community? Is such a choice by the Herrnhuter something special? Reply: The church building admittedly frequently stands in the centre of the community, but in most cases it is precisely removed from the business centre. Among the Ronsdörfer, for example (who built their settlement after the pattern of the Herrnhuter) the home of Eller forms the centre of the settlement; for it is here, in this house, where the birth of the new "saviour" is expected, whom Eller was to beget with the "prophethood"! Similarly, the church building never occupies the centre of the Waldensian settlements in Germany, and that not out of topographical reasons (which occasionally are the determining factor in Italy and France), but rather because the church was always the last structure to be built. (The kind of "spirit" behind this is clear! What it reveals is certainly less the spirit of the Waldensians than the "spirit" of those who financed the settlements and wanted to save money.)

2. And do the barrack-like corps-houses not obviously belong in the centre of the community? Where else should they have been built? The representative administrative buildings in a *Residenzstadt* are generally located around the square! Reply: What is involved here are precisely not representative administration buildings but rather residences for the unmarried "soldiers of Christ". The right place for them would normally have been along the edge of the community. Since however, this group of people, as the "active forces" form something like the "centre" of the religious body of the Herrnhuter, their place of residence belongs in the geographic centre of the settlement.

3. And what about the large square? Is such a square not generally found at the centre of every settlement? Reply: Such a large one, and on top of that not as market place, but rather as "park"? (Cf. n. 27.) Actually the Brethren communities are "park settlements". Just as the houses in a street settlement are built along either side of the streets, so here everything is located around the (park) square. The "square" is almost larger than the area occupied by the rest of the settlement in these communities! (At least originally.) There are, of course, many square settlements in east Germany, especially in Silesia, but there they are always urban settlements! Naturally, one could say that Zinzendorf, in his "megomania", had taken these examples (perhaps unconsciously) as basis and actually wanted to found Brethren cities. Only later it turned out that such plans were too

settlement-shaping, spiritual character of the adherents of this religious community, it is now possible to illustrate in a further stage of the work the details of the settlement pattern (and of the population,

ambitious. So the miscarried cities became villages, which look like cities but are none. (But neither are they genuine villages. Cf. n. 32.)

It could then be said, that now Zinzendorf (or the congregation) made a virtue out of necessity in subsequently reinterpreting the matter (whether consciously or unconsciously is immaterial) and converted the square into a "park" or a "mission square".

There may admittedly be some truth in this line of argument. (Cf. n. 22.) Zinzendorf did think in large dimensions (even though for the most part unconsciously as a result of his origins and his character), and his followers frequently did the same thing. Thus in Königsfeld for example, they erected a church building for six hundred people at a time when the entire community only had forty inhabitants; from the outset they counted on attendance at the worship services by people from the neighbourhood! (And it soon turned out that it had been good to build so large a place. In other cases, however, they had to admit later that their plans had been too grandiose.)

However that may be, if the individual facts had not fitted so extraordinarily well into the theologically moulded network of relations which I have presented, then surely this settlement pattern would have been abandoned later on and a decision would have been made either in favour of a "proper" village or of a "proper" town, or else the settlements of themselves would have progressed to become genuine towns or regressed to become villages. In many other aspects, where the target was initially overshot there had to be a reassessment later on. Compare in this connection the "sobering" effect of the "Sichtungszeit".

4. On the question of *openness*: every village may be regarded as "open"; for it has no wall! In spite of this most villages are dominated by a spirit that is everything but "open". Why then is it claimed that precisely among the Herrnhuter the spiritual attitude and the settlement pattern are suited to each other in the manner indicated? Response: During the Middle Ages villagers would frequently have wanted to erect walls (for defence purposes), but did not have the money to do so. Furthermore, who should be responsible for defence in case of emergency? The farmer? The Herrnhuter certainly could have found the means to surround their settlements with a wall (compare the walled monasteries), but they did not want to do so! They did not want a monastic settlement!

There is a second consideration. A wall can be built for purely defensive reasons (compare the towns of the Middle Ages, which in spite of their walls were in no way intellectually-spiritually "walled off"), but it can also symbolize the contemplative closedness toward the world, or it can fulfill both purposes at once. (This was the case with the monasteries of the Middle Ages.) Since the defence aspect could no longer be a reason for the building of a wall at the time of the founding of the Herrnhuter settlements in the 18th century, only the "intellectual-spiritual" attitude could have demanded such a wall. This attitude was precisely missing among the Herrnhuter.

5. Regarding *climate and environment*. It can be objected that the form of the inward-directed monastic settlement, surrounded by its wall, has nothing to do with either the "spirit" of the inhabitants nor with the desire for defensive

economic, and social structures belonging to it.) This is the beginning of the actual detailed geographical work.³¹⁾

In this, careful research will be necessary to determine how far local deviations from the ideal type in any given instance are caused by a spiritual attitude which differs from that of the brotherhood as a whole and how far purely external circumstances determined such variations. In Rixdorf, for example, it is clearly a different spiritual attitude which was the determining factor, naturally together with the corresponding occupational, social, etc. structures. (Cf. n. 19 and 27.) In Neuwied, on the other hand, purely external reasons forced a substantial deviation from the ideal settlement pattern. In that case the Brethren were struggling at first to put their ideals into realization, but were then forced by the Count of Wied to adapt to the town plan and to locate the park-square on the inside. (Cf. n. 22.)

fortifications; instead, climatic reasons in the place of origin of the settlement type are responsible for building in precisely this, and not some other, manner! Because of the excessive heat in southern Europe and in the Orient all houses are "closed" to the outside, and "open" to the inside. Consider for example the houses in Italy with their large inner court and the surrounding wall.

Response: As is well known, the main concern of the monk is separation from the world, even if later on other things play into the picture. Monasticism in any case originates out of the contemplative spiritual attitude. And the common (for climatic reasons) architectural style of the Orient suited this attitude! Had monasticism originated in northern Europe, it would perhaps have taken over the building style prevalent there at the time, but with time it would certainly have abandoned this style because it does not suit the contemplative attitude. (Consider how the architectural style often changed in parallel with the "secularization" of religious orders.)

Applied to the settlement of the Brethren this means: admittedly, the Herrnhuter took over (with specific modifications) the building style current in the area of the origin of their "religion" (i.e., central Germany in the 18th century), which had developed there for climatic or whatever reasons. However, they retained this form, even when they came to other parts of the world in which climatic or other circumstances (defence against natives) would actually have demanded a different style of building. Only when the given physio-geographical situation makes it absolutely impossible to realize the ideal settlement type location on a slope, do they deviate from it. (For example, Bethlehem, U.S.A.)

In summary, it can be said, that even if I am wrong in individual aspects, the *totality of individual facts* (that is, the harmonizing of the whole network of relationships) is readily understandable with the aid of my interpretation. In my scheme everything fits together amazingly; I will therefore adhere to my interpretation until someone presents an alternative one which provides a better understanding of the total network of relations (not only one or another isolated individual aspect).

31) We have completed this detailed work for Neugnadenfeld.

This gives rise to another basic methodological insight: in the case of religious societies which have settled in widely scattered areas, it is necessary first of all to visit all the individual places in order to develop a feeling for the "collective spirit" of the "religion" which shapes the settlements. Only then does it make sense to study the individual settlements in greater detail! It is not only the Herrnhuter who can—and should—be approached by this method, but also for example, all of the monastic orders, and the many Protestant sects, but above all the settlements in the developing countries. It may turn out that one can view all of the settlements of a given religious society, taken together, as one single large city, especially when dealing with so small a group as the Herrnhuter. This thesis (for the time being merely a working hypothesis) has several things in its favour, and would help to explain many aspects of other scattered religious groups (monastic settlements). Frequently individual communities remain entities foreign to their immediate surroundings, and (with respect to their social and economic network) leapfrog the immediate neighbourhood,³²) a phenomenon usually clearly recognizable geographically (for example, by the absence of traffic arteries to neighbouring communities, absence of commuters, etc.).

In the following remarks I want to indicate briefly what the geographer (after he has discovered the settlement-shaping "collective spirit" of the "religion" in connection with his macro analysis) needs to do in the detailed analysis (in order to ferret out the distinctive peculiarities or deviations of each individual place), and how this is to be done.

1. *The settlement plan.* For each location a site map must be prepared, which will indicate exactly where the Herrnhuter live, how the network of streets runs, etc. (These maps will then show at a glance, which locations or parts of locations, are still overwhelmingly *brüderisch* and the extent to which an intermingling has already taken place.)

2. *Population.* Here it is necessary to determine the place of origin of the residents of individual Herrnhuter settlements. This too can be

32) Specifically, for this reason (cf. n. 28) I am inclined to consider all Brethren locations together as one single large "Brethren city", of which each community constitutes a quarter with its own special task. Travel patterns provide additional information. With respect to the destinations of vacation trips the Brethren are highly unusual.

cartographically portrayed. But here too the geographer of religion is not so much interested in mere factual material (how many people came from where) as he is in finding out how far this has significance for the interaction of the relations between religion and its surroundings (cf. below).

A few examples follow: Herrnhut itself was affected by a Moravian, Bohemian, and Silesian thrust. Neuwied in contrast, was originally under a strong French influence (although the Herrnhuter "spirit" quickly permeated it), but later, especially after the Second World War, it was flooded by settlers from the eastern territories. For each original settler there is today one new immigrant. (In spite of this—precisely because of the universally similar spiritual attitude of the Brethren—the total picture of the Neuwied congregation has changed much less than would normally have been expected with such a proportion of new immigrants.)

A particularly interesting example is that of Neugnadenfeld, which was only founded after 1945, and has become a kind of melting pot for Brethren from all over Europe. (A monograph about this community in Emsland will be published shortly, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Neugnadenfeld.)

Further, it is also necessary to prepare a *population pyramid* for each location and to determine the population growth (through natural increase or immigration and conversions). These should be considered in relation to the Brethren community as a whole but also in relation to the surrounding neighbourhood of each location. Here too attention must be given to aspects that are directly affected by religion (what influence religion has for example on sexual morality, family planning, etc.) and to those influenced by economic or other factors (migrations to or from a location because of the presence or absence of industry, etc.).

In several locations for example the population of the Brethren is increasing more rapidly (either directly through higher birthrate or indirectly through conversions or immigration) than the general population. I am told however, that occasionally the situation is precisely the reverse (caused mainly through the emigration of young people who find better work opportunities elsewhere!).

3. *Economy and transportation.* Beginning with the economic attitude as shaped by religion, a study of the economic development and the

related development of transportation should be undertaken in the individual communities of the Brethren, with particular attention to the influence which the Brethren communities exercised (or exercise) on their immediate surroundings. Sometimes a kind of self-sufficient "confederacy" is recognizable. Frequently the economic network completely leapfrogs the immediate neighbourhood, the community remaining a foreign entity in its surroundings and being completely oriented towards the larger Brethren unity (cf. n. 32).

Occasionally however, the community functions as a nucleus and strongly influences the economic structures of the neighbourhood, as for example in Niesky and Bethlehem. As a consequence new industries are being built up, non-Brethren workers are being brought in, (resulting in a domination of the community by outsiders), a reorientation of the transportation network takes place, etc. (In this connection a study should be made of the reasons which cause some communities to become economically encapsulated against the surrounding area, and other communities to integrate fully.³³) The special case of Königsfeld should be studied here, which experienced further development as a result of its establishing itself as a health resort. (Cf. the essay by Gormsen.)

4. *Social and occupational structure.* The division into corps applies now as before (however, only as relics), although at present no geographically apprehensible influence can be ascribed to it, except possibly the fact that burial on the cemetery (called "God's acre") even today is done not according to families but according to corps. (This is the case for example in Königsfeld. There a wife is buried not

33) My preliminary working thesis on this is as follows: Wherever Calvinistic economic thinking enters (or entered) into the Brethren communities which are moulded by Lutheran influence, a stronger economic spirit develops. Considerations of profitability, etc. now arise, concepts which the old Brethren would have rejected as "worldly" thinking. The case of Abraham Dürninger (See Hammer, 1925), coming from Switzerland and fundamentally altering the economic life and the economic thinking in some communities, has led me to this working thesis. However, a detailed study is needed to clarify the actual situation of this case. The same forces will not produce the same effects in each location. The geography of religion is not a natural science! (Cf. n. 30.)

After the War a stricter theological tendency arose, stimulated by the Americans. Now the argument ran that it was not proper for a Brethren congregation to operate a brewery. Consequently the business was discontinued. Theological considerations were stronger than economic ones!

next to her husband, but next to her corps sister.) Similarly, it is the case that now as before the Brethren are for the most part artisans (only in recent times have they increasingly become industrial commuters in the current process of reaction), although the proportion of academics in certain places is surprisingly strong.³⁴⁾

Here too, the influence (or the absence of an influence) on the environment is to be studied. In addition the relative position of the occupational and social structure of the individual community within the larger confederation of the Brethren should be determined, and how the situation changed during the course of time (and for what reasons).

5. *Other.* (General culture, customs, tradition, etc.) The Brethren constitute a musical religious society rivalled by few others. (This may be due to the Bohemian-Moravian musical culture; but Zinzendorf himself was a great music lover, who often gave personal musical leadership to his congregation.) Besides the high German language which frequently sets the Brethren apart from the neighbourhood, their cultivation of music makes their communities into something like "musical islands". Almost the whole congregation regularly meets once a week for singing practice. As Tuckermann has pointed out even the Catholic neighbourhood was animated by the singing of the Herrnhuter in Königsfeld.

An even stronger influence on its surroundings was (and is) the brass music of the Herrnhuter. The Protestant brass ensembles derive from those of the Herrnhuter.³⁵⁾ Wherever a new Herrnhuter community arises (prime example, Neugandensfeld in Emsland) new brass and vocal choirs arise. At musical festivals the Herrnhuter regularly are over-represented.³⁶⁾

With respect to other customs and traditions no influence on the surroundings can be detected. The Herrnhuter "costume" (the women wear the well-known bonnets) has not been adopted by any of the

34) Theologians constitute the larger portion of the academic class, but other professions involving higher education are relatively strongly represented.

35) In my doctoral thesis in music history I have investigated these matters more closely. (See Büttner, 1953.)

36) I am told that at the music festival in the Löbau area for example little Herrnhut furnishes approximately 40% of the musicians; that is, it astonishingly overrepresented in this area. A similar situation applies for Neugandensfeld and its "environment".

neighbourhoods. In fact the Herrnhuter themselves are more and more abandoning this head-gear and wearing "profane" hats. (The white casket and the other peculiar Brethren customs at burial are still maintained. But these are of less interest to the geographer as are the special Brethren liturgy and similar things.)

2. *The influence of the feedback from the modern world on the Herrnhuter social, occupational, and economic structure and on the Herrnhuter "spirit"*

It goes without saying that the relationship which I have indicated between the spiritual attitude, social structures, settlement patterns, etc., existed in a balanced form only during the 18th century, that is, at the time of the formation of the Brethren communities. This balance was first caused to waver by the changing environment of the 19th century; however, since the Brethren congregation had an astounding inner stability (and conservativeness), things did not change much until the Second World War. Admittedly the settlements no longer fitted so well into the new social and economic structures,³⁷⁾ but they got along.

Now, since the 1950's, the feedback, whose influence had remained submerged for some time, has suddenly manifested itself externally, thus becoming accessible to the geographer (whose realm is largely confined to the externals). In many locations a process has already begun of tearing down old buildings and constructing a new settlement pattern, suited to the new Herrnhuter spirit, the new social, economic, population structures, etc.

Precisely at this point the second aspect of my research begins. I want to determine exactly what forces of the environment influence the Herrnhuter in the various locations in such a way that the feedback process has varying consequences from place to place.³⁸⁾

In one case it may be a new factory which can negatively transform a whole Brethren community. It begins with workers commuting to the

37) The example of Neuwied illustrates the difficulties involved in settling families in the "barracks" originally built for single "soldiers of Christ".

38) A striking example is the way in which modern industrial society with its commuters for the first time created the situation in which Rixdorf slowly overcame its inhibiting conservatism and closedness. To a certain extent they were forced to become more open to the outside.

factory, the income rises and with it the standard of living; this may be followed by emigration and eventually by a loss of the Herrnhuter "spirit". 39)

In another instance it may be possible to direct this development positively, for example by building up enterprises owned by the Brethren (or at least to attract industry to the community), and thus provide employment for the Brethren. In still another case it is possible that conservatism may prevent such a solution and only the negative components of the feedback process manifest themselves.

In any case, the modern world is forcing itself into the Brethren communities on a broad front, shattering the old balances. A new spiritual attitude arises in connection with the new social, occupational and economic structures. It is of great interest to the geographer of religion to study this feedback (and the results of his research might be of interest also to theologians and *Religionswissenschaftler*). 40)

E. SUMMARY

The "synthetic geography of religion" within the system of all disciplines concerned with religion. The dialectic process of the development of religions and the network of reciprocal relationships between religion 41) and its environment. 42)

39) Since the Brethren somehow want to get a more positive feel for this development, they are very interested in our researches and very ready to cooperate.

40) Since the Brethren are a religious society which is relatively easy to survey and because of their high level of intelligence readily researchable (their membership in Germany only amounts to 10,000), it is possible to aim for rather precise results. Every individual member can be questioned, eliminating the need for the usual (but always imperfect) limiting of oneself to a representative portion of the population. (Later on, with the larger religious groups, it will no doubt be impossible to avoid the use of representative inquiries. Cf. n. 2.)

41) This is not the place to discuss in detail what "religion" is.

As a practical man and an empiricist the geographer always begins with the tangible and the visible, never with religion as such or with its dogmatic content, etc., but (if he does not actually begin with the landscape) at the most with the reality of a religious society, its population, its economic system, etc. But also with its faith. He is therefore fundamentally less interested in religious writings! He is not interested in that which a member of the community of faith is supposed to believe and do, but rather with what he actually does and actually believes, and how that moulds the social, economic, settlement pattern, etc.

It is precisely through this one-sided emphasis on realities that the geographer is able to contribute substantially to the dialogue with other disciplines working in religion.

42) For a definition of "environment" cf. n. 14.

We now leave the Herrnhuter in order to make a general evaluation of the methodological insights gained from this example for our discipline and for its relations to the neighbouring disciplines. The geographer of religion (as geographer, that is on the basis of empirical and spatial criteria as pointed out above), in teamwork with all the other disciplines insofar as they are concerned with religion, needs to study the reciprocal relationships between religion and its environment which occur within the framework of a dialectical process. (Cf. the figures 1-3 below. This process I have illustrated by means of a spiral. An extensive explanation of the figures are given in my essays "Der dialektische Prozess..." and "Neue Strömungen". See the bibliography.)

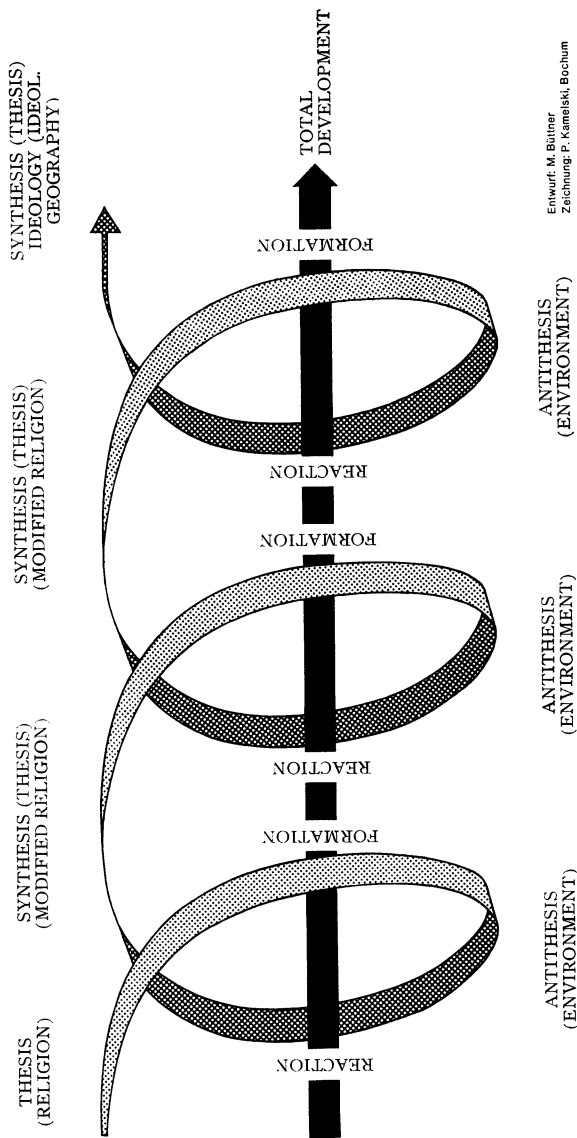
In describing this endless dialectical spiral (or development) of religion, one can begin at any desired place and stop at any suitable point. The entire spiral can never be encompassed, but that is not necessary; it is sufficient to render understandable at least that part of the spiral which has been scientifically studied.

It is therefore desirable to begin from a position (I refer to it operationally as a "beginning stage") which is relatively clear. This beginning stage already consists of a mixture of the given input (itself consisting of revelation and the influence of the environment, cf. figure # 3), new revelation (especially in the case of revealed religions, which have a founder and a—generally written—revelation), and the influence of the environment, and will need to be analyzed and described accordingly. No founder of a religion, not even Christ, completely ignores all of the preceding developments, and influences from the environment penetrate every revelation including the Christian one.

It is important that this beginning stage of a religion, as it is found in the area of its origin, be described by the *Religionswissenschaftler* (and in the case of the Christian "religion", by the theologian), of course in cooperation with the geographer who knows the environment and can help the *Religionswissenschaftler* to separate the new elements of the revelation from the accidentals (or however the "externals" are designated) deriving from the environment.

In the end however it is the *Religionswissenschaftler* ⁴³⁾ (or the-

43) A few remarks are in order about the dialogue between the geographers and *Religionswissenschaftler* which began some time ago and is steadily increasing.



Entwurf: M. Büttner
Zeichnung: P. Kamiński, Bochum

Figure 1

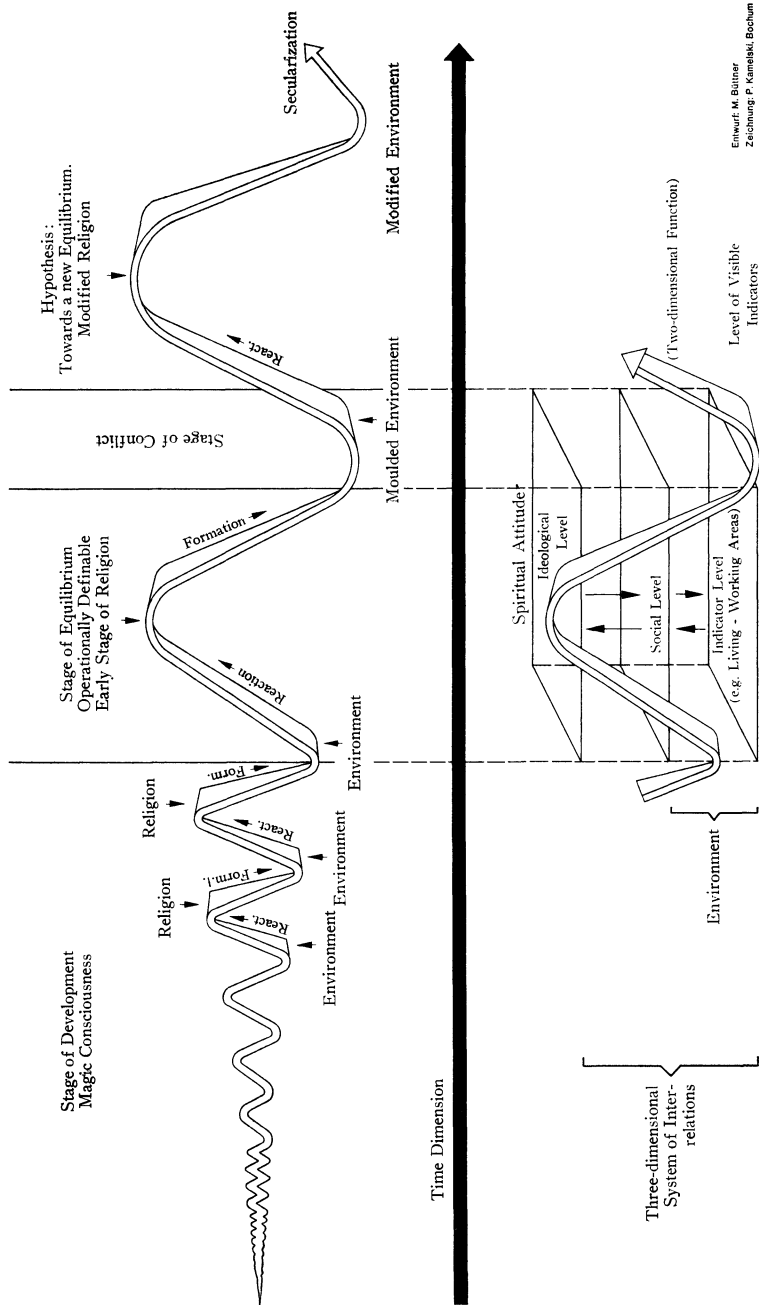
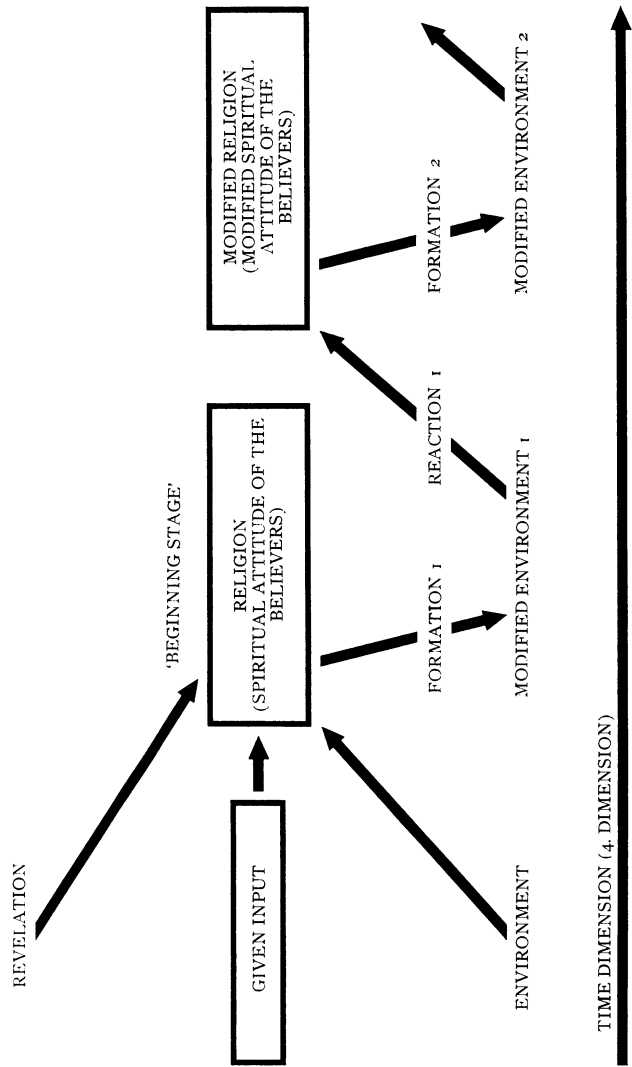


Figure 2
For the relationships between social geography and geography of religion compare
my essay "Neue Strömungen ..." (See bibliography).



Entwurf: M. Büttner
Zeichnung: P. Kamiński, Bochum

Figure 3

ologian) who must determine the "centre" of this religion at this particular time and place, and find out the extent to which the factors of the environment have penetrated this "centre" with their influence. The geographer will withhold judgment on this aspect. 44) (Note how-

As far as I know, Angelika Sievers began this dialogue through her religious-geographical publications in a missiological journal after the War. (In this connection mention should also be made of her recently completed missiological work, written as a geographer. See *Christi Wort in aller Welt*, Dssd. 1965.)

A second stimulus came from the theologian and philosopher of religion Ratschow, who invited me as a geographer to an assistantship and so offered me the possibility of coming into the closest contact between geography, theology, and *Religionswissenschaft*.

Independently of this the Westermann publishing house (at the suggestion of the geographer Tietze) assigned the key words of the geography of religion (geography of religion, Christianity, Buddhism, etc.) for their new lexicon to Zimpel, Sprockhoff and Suchel. This provided a decided impetus for the dialogue between geographers and *Religionswissenschaftler*, particularly since the geographer Troll, as rector of the University of Bonn, forcefully impressed on the *Religionswissenschaftler* assembled at Bonn for their Congress the importance of such a dialogue in his opening speech. At the following congress in Munich the indologist Sprockhoff presented a basic paper about the relationships between geography of religion and *Religionswissenschaft*. (Later published in *Numen*, 1964).

Meanwhile (supported and frequently even pressed by the above mentioned and many other geographers, theologians and *Religionswissenschaftler*), I am doing my part to force along the dialogue which has been begun. At the German Geographical Meeting in Erlangen and again at the Congress of *Religionswissenschaftler* in Berchtesgaden I presented a paper about geography of religion. (Both papers have since been published. See bibliography.)

In Bonn also, through the mediation of Mensching the contact between *Religionswissenschaft* and geography has meanwhile been significantly strengthened. Mr. Klimkeit and I jointly conducted a geography of religion seminar there. At present we are planning a joint research project (Cf. n. 9.)

44) Difficulties of a peculiar nature arise at this point; for the *Religionswissenschaftler* (and also the theologians) are of divided opinion on this problematic area. Some say that the actual founder of a religion, the prophet, etc., merely establishes a relationship between the things of his environment and the nucleus of his faith. This nucleus itself (that is the "centre") is not influenced by the environment. The opposite thesis holds that precisely the "centre" has been and is repeatedly moulded by the environment. Compare in this connection Genesis 1 and 2. That which manifests itself at the "fringes" and so supposedly concerns only the external and unimportant aspect of religion, is the reorientation of the "centre" (under the influence of the environment) which becomes externally visible.

It is interesting to note what representatives of socialist countries say on this point. Attention is drawn to the book by Tokarew (1969) which is becoming known even in the West, in which sentences can be found like the following: "Thus man created gods for himself after his own image, and this image changed

ever that Sopher says that even here the geographer of religion participates, for the geography of religion is partly geography and partly *Religionswissenschaft*. See in this connection my essay "Ein neuer Wendepunkt . . .").

Out of the religion thus ascertained through this kind of theological-*religionswissenschaftlich* stock-taking, the geographer of religion then has to select those components which give shape to the landscape, settlement, economy, etc. These may well be components which in the total structure of the particular religion play only a subordinate role. However, as the example of the Herrnhuter indicates, the centre of the religion can also provide the main component shaping the landscape. ⁴⁵⁾

The particular task of the geographer of religion (precisely as geographer and in accordance with currently accepted methods of cultural geography) would then be to describe the cultural-geographical elements, such as settlement, transportation and communication network, population, economic, and social structures, etc., which are influenced or shaped by these religious components.

Now the environment, which has been shaped by the religious community, changes! It changes on the spot through the fact that new ideas are brought in from the outside (or arise within the location itself.). Every place has its own history. The political, social, and economic circumstances change in spite of the conservative tendencies of most religions. The geographer of religions must study these cultural-geographical changes in the environment (in spite of unchanging physio-geographical features) primarily with the methods of social geography, settlement geography, economic geography, etc., and determine in teamwork with the *Religionswissenschaftler* their feedback on the religion itself. ⁴⁶⁾

to the extent that human society developed." For Tokarew only the influences emanating from the environment has validity. He ignores, as Feuerbach did earlier, the fact that there is always another factor which is not explainable solely on the basis of the environment. (Believers call this revelation.) Compare in this connection what Hartke as a social geographer says about the evaluation of geographers. (See bibliography.)

45) For the geographer it is immaterial whether this "centre" has been moulded by the environment or not, or whether the *Religionswissenschaftler* agree on this point or not. He will merely identify the environment-moulding components of religion, without himself entering into the discussion.

46) The geographer will leave the decision, whether these reacting forces change

On the other hand religion also spreads into new areas, and there makes contact with a new environment (new also in its physio-geographical aspect). (This spread of the religion can take the form of the spread of ideas or also of the migration of the believers. In most cases the two are combined.)

Now the geographer of religion is called upon to function as a full geographer so to speak, because the new environment is distinguished generally by a different climate, a different soil, different relief, different social and economic structures, etc.

He must first of all indicate the details of the spread of the religion (direction of movement, number of immigrants, etc.). Then he must determine whether the (old) religion now shapes the newly occupied environment (which is not as clearly the case with the spread of ideas as it is with the migration of the believers) or whether a feedback begins immediately.⁴⁷⁾

This too constitutes a supporting service on the part of the geographer for the theologian and the *Religionswissenschaftler*. He directs attention to the new environment and identifies the forces which may possibly produce a feedback. Above all he will seek out individual components which from his point of view might be of importance.

The evaluation of these hints and stimuli of the geographer of religions is of course once more the task of the theologian or the *Religionswissenschaftler*. He will need to decide whether the old religion merely forms a relationship between the elements of the new environment and the old unchanged core of the faith (this will generally be the case with creation stories and the other examples given above) or whether this core itself is changed as a result of the feedback.⁴⁸⁾

the "centre" of the religion or not to the *Religionswissenschaftler* (as indicated in n. 44). His task is to draw attention to the fact that these forces exist and what their detailed nature is.

47) As is seen from the example of the Herrnhuter and Waldensians, the leader of such a group plays an important role in this connection. The Herrnhuter for example, for centuries moulded their environment wherever they came. The Waldensians did the same as long as they had leaders. In the absence of a leader, (as for example among the Waldensians in Baden-Württemberg) the feedback process immediately began. After a short while they were being "remoulded" by their new environment.

48) In my work "Die Stellung der Frau in der menschlichen Gesellschaft" (1959) I have shown, as a geographer using scientific methods, that in certain cases it depends on the climate whether a religious society believes its deity to

In any case, the end product of this feedback process is a modified religion.⁴⁹⁾ Included in this modification is the "supplementary revelation" originating with the reformers.

Here too it is necessary to ascertain what is determined by the environment and what is not.⁵⁰⁾ In so doing, to speak figuratively, one twist of the spiral has been scientifically clarified. Now the next twist can be studied. Again one would have to describe the shaping of the landscape or environment under the influence of the (now modified) religion and study the feedback.

F. CONCLUSION

The geographer, as geographer of religion, must give most of his consideration to the "lower level" of the unendingly spiraling three-tiered network of relations between religion and its environment. He begins "at the bottom" (that is, from the visible facts of the landscape) and then checks back (in teamwork with the theologian, *Religionswissenschaftler*, sociologist, economist, demographical geographer, etc.) to find out what specific forces produced these facts. (First stage)

be masculine or feminine or whether salvation comes via a masculine or feminine person. I pass this discovery on to theologians or *Religionswissenschaftler*, not however, in order to explain religion (or certain individual components) on the basis of climate or the social environment, but rather in order to point out that such matters do play a role. In the final analysis the theologian will have to decide whether the religious nucleus is affected in such a case or not. In fact, these suggestions may be helpful in defining what in a given religion is the nucleus (the "centre") and what is not.

49) The Herrnhuter, whom I have used as an example, are at the moment in this process of modification. But all of Christianity (actually all religions) is currently experiencing such a transformation as a consequence of the feedback process emanating from the modern industrial world. But it should not be overlooked that Christianity, in its movement to the West (compare the analogous movement of Buddhism to the East), has repeatedly been modified. Contemporary Christianity has become so westernized in the course of church history (which ought some time to be rewritten by a geographer of religion) through the repeated absorption of new environmental influences (beginning with the influx of Greek thoughts through Paul), that it has little in common with primitive Christianity or even with eastern Nestorian Christianity.

A religio-geographical study of Christendom would have to give particular attention to this feedback. The landscape-moulding force of Christianity does not exist, but merely a moulding force which has in turn itself been repeatedly modified in the feedback process.

50) Cf. Frick who attempted to explain the reforming act of Luther on the basis of the Wittenberg landscape.

Next he studies the feedback from the environment. He thus provides the theologian and the *Religionswissenschaftler* with material for an analysis of the modified religion. (Second stage) He then observes how the *Religionswissenschaftler* describes this modified religion and particularly how he integrates the influences of the environment into the total system of the modified religion. (Or he may do this latter task himself if as a geographer of religion he is also qualified in *Religionswissenschaft*. Cf. Sopher.)

Finally he determines once more (again beginning "at the bottom") those forces of the new comprehensive theological system which in new ways influence the landscape (settlement, social structure, etc.), after he has first described the phenomena in detail (according to the currently acceptable geographical methods.). Stage 3 = stage 1, and so on.

I emphasize that we are concerned here with a contribution to the discussion. Such a contribution is concerned first of all with stimulating, not with producing final formulas. Much of what I have said here may possibly provoke contradiction and may need to be changed. (Cf. n. 30.) What is important is that the dialogue which has begun between the geographers and *Religionswissenschaftler* should be continued intensively, and that the readers of this periodical might see that there is a great readiness for this on the part of the geographers and not only on the part of *Religionswissenschaftler* or theologians.

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I MITI COSMOGONICI DEGLI YEZIDI

DI

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La comunità religiosa degli Yezidi, tuttora rappresentata da alcuni gruppi residenti in Siria, nell'Iraq settentrionale, nell'Armenia sovietica e in Georgia ¹⁾, costituisce sotto il profilo storico e fenomenologico un problema ancora aperto. La difficoltà di individuare le origini e i successivi sviluppi di questa complessa struttura religiosa, etnica e sociale ²⁾ rimane nonostante il numero relativamente cospicuo di docu-

1) Sulla localizzazione geografica delle comunità yezidiche cfr. K. E. Müller, *Kulturhistorische Studien zur Genese pseudo-islamischer Sektengebilde in Vorderasien*, Wiesbaden 1967, pp. 132-134 e Carta III a p. 100.

2) Fondamentale a questo riguardo è la regola endogamica che, fondata su precise motivazioni religiose (discendenza diretta del popolo yezidico da un figlio generato dal solo Adamo), mira a preservare, con la purezza della schiatta, la qualità di „popolo eletto”, precluso a contaminazioni razziali e culturali. Cfr. N. Siouffi, *Notice sur la secte des Yézidis* in „Journal Asiatique”, 7a serie, XX (1882), p. 259 sg., dove si riferisce una tradizione orale intorno alla nascita eccezionale di Shahid-ibn-el-jarra, „il martire, figlio della giara”, capostipite degli Yezidi. Di costui essi dicono: „Il nostro padre (Shahid) è nato da Adamo soltanto, senza l'intervento della donna e senza alcuna mescolanza con il sangue corruttibile del sesso femminile. Quanto a nostra madre, essa du fi origine celeste” (*art. cit.*, p. 260). Vedi anche A. Guérinot, *Les Yézidis* in „Revue du Monde Musulman”, V (1908), p. 586 sg. e p. 600; G. Furlani, *Testi religiosi dei Yezidi*, Bologna 1930, p. 37 sg. La medesima tradizione, con qualche particolare nuovo, è riferita dallo Heard (*Notes on the Yezidis* in „Journal of the R. Anthropological Institute” XLI, 1911, p. 202 sg.) Il *Libro nero* parimenti conosce la discendenza diretta da Adamo della nazione yezidica (cap. 14 in Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 84) mentre, secondo una notizia riferita dal Kovalevsky (*Les Kourdes et les Iésides ou les adorateurs du démon* in „Bulletin de la Société royale belge de Géographie”, XIV, 1890, p. 173), gli Yezidi affermerebbero di essere „derivati dalle nozze di uno spirito 'Iesden', che aveva preso forma umana, e da una *hourî* del paradiso”. Un testo pubblicato dallo Chabot (*Notice sur les Yézidis, publiée d'après deux manuscrits syriaques de la Bibliothèque Nationale* in „J. A.”, 9a serie, vol. VII, 1896, p. 118) e la *Memoria* edita dal Giamil (*Monte Singar. Storia di un popolo ignoto*, Roma 1900, p. 17 sg.) attestano una ulteriore tradizione secondo la quale Adamo avrebbe generato, senza il concorso di Eva, due gemelli, maschio e femmina, dai quali ebbe origine il popolo yezidico. Tale notizia appare anche nel manoscritto arabo pubblicato dal Joseph (*Yezidi Texts* in „The American Journal of Semitic Languages

menti e notizie che la riguardano e l'ampio panorama di ricerche di cui è stata fatta oggetto. Le interpretazioni degli studiosi sono diverse e spesso contraddittorie per la consistenza stessa del fenomeno yezidico, alla cui formazione sembrano aver concorso elementi di varia natura e provenienza, stratificati e fusi in maniera ormai inestricabile³⁾; inadeguato ed arbitrario risulterebbe pertanto ogni tentativo di troppo rigida „dissezione” delle singole componenti e ancor più la pretesa di ricondurre tutto il contesto yezidico all'una o all'altra delle reali o presunte fonti di queste componenti medesime. Tali considerazioni e riserve

and Literatures”, XXV, 1909, 2, p. 223). Altri documenti sottolineano il carattere chiuso della comunità. Si veda, ad esempio, il *Memoriale dei Yezidi alle autorità ottomane* in Furlani, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-102 e il *Catechismo* reso noto dal Dirr (*Einiges über die Jeziden* in „Anthropos”, XII-XIII, 1917-18, pp. 571-573; cfr. Furlani, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-117) dove, al paragrafo 4, si afferma: „E' proibito severamente ai Yezidi di entrare in relazione con appartenenti ad altri popoli. In caso diverso si espongono alla maledizione di Dio”.

3) Le ascendenze degli Yezidi sono state indicate nelle direzioni più disparate e spesso si è ricorso ad un troppo facile appello al „sincretismo” per definire la consistenza dello yezidismo. In questa sede non è possibile offrire una sia pur rapida rivista delle opinioni degli studiosi. Si veda a tal proposito Furlani, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-35; Id., *L'antidualismo dei Yezidi* in „Orientalia”, N.S., 13 (1944), pp. 236-267, dove si esaminano le posizioni di alcuni autori in relazione al problema della presunta qualità di „adoratori del diavolo” tanto spesso attribuita agli Yezidi. Diremo soltanto che il Guidi ritiene di aver individuato la matrice storica dello yezidismo in una frangia estrema del partito filo-ommiade, affermando in tal modo la connessione reale del movimento con la figura del califfo Yazid (*Origine dei Yazidi e storia religiosa dell'Islām e del dualismo* in „Rivista degli studi orientali”, XIII, 1931-32, pp. 266-300; *Nuove ricerche sui Yazidi*, *ibid.*, pp. 377-427). Il Furlani, mentre riconosce l'importanza di una componente islamica, sottolinea piuttosto la presenza di elementi iranici (accetta infatti la derivazione del nome Yezidi da „yazada”, *op. cit.*, p. 9 sg.) e cristiani-nestoriani. I primi, anzi, costituirebbero „il sostrato fondamentale su cui si sviluppò poi ulteriormente la loro dottrina, avvicinandosi di molto all'Islām ed in parte anche al cristianesimo” (*ibid.*, p. 12). Del tutto opposte sono le conclusioni del Bois e del Müller: mentre il primo afferma l'origine puramente musulmana (con forti influenze sufiche) della setta che, per ragioni politiche e religiose, avrebbe più tardi professato dottrine diverse dall'Islam (Th. Bois, *Les Yézidis. Essai historique et sociologique sur leur origine religieuse* in „Al Machriq” 55, 1961, pp. 109-128; 190-242), più recentemente il Müller giudica „pseudo-islamica” la setta yezidica, insieme con altre parzialmente affini (Drusi, Nusairi, Ahl-i Haqq), a diverso titolo e con apporti e stratificazioni varie, ritenute germogliate su una *humus* cristiana più o meno eterodossa (*op. cit.*, *passim* e in particolare pp. 384-393). Infine, A. Bausani annovera gli Yezidi fra le *Religioni nuove sorte dall'Islam* (in G. Castellani, ed., *Storia delle Religioni*, vol. V, Torino 1971, pp. 215-274) accogliendo sostanzialmente l'ipotesi del Guidi intorno all'origine della setta da un ambiente di „estremisti” filo-ommiadi, veneratori di Yazid (*art. cit.*, p. 242; p. 247 sg.).

appaiono opportune in questa sede in cui ci proponiamo di esaminare un aspetto particolare della dottrina, sia pur esso di rilevanza primaria nel quadro generale della visione religiosa della comunità yezidica. Si tratta infatti di quelle narrazioni relative alle origini, le quali con il loro carattere eziologico, e in quanto intese come fondanti la vita attuale, assumono un'importanza notevole per la comprensione della totalità del contesto religioso in cui si pongono.

Im ambiente yezidico sono presenti numerose versioni del mito cosmogonico, delle quali due, riferite dal testo sacro dal titolo *Libro nero* ⁴⁾, esprimerebbero „una tradizione dotta poco diffusa” ⁵⁾, mentre le altre, raccolte in base ad informazioni orali, avrebbero carattere più popolare, rivelando le credenze dei comuni fedeli ⁶⁾. Non pare tuttavia che questa distinzione fra una tradizione „dotta” (scritta) e una „popolare” (orale) sia del tutto pertinente, una volta che le dottrine contenute nel *Libro nero*, ivi compreso il mito di creazione, risultano parimenti attestare attraverso dirette informazioni orali ⁷⁾. Piuttosto è da notare

4) Quest'opera, insieme con un altro testo sacro yezidico dal titolo *Kitāb al ġūwah* („Libro della rivelazione”), si possiede in due versioni, rispettivamente in arabo e in curdo; la prima fu resa nota da E. H. Browne in traduzione inglese (in O. H. Parry, *Six Months in a Syrian Monastery*, London 1895, Appendice, pp. 374-380) e più tardi, sulla base di un diverso manoscritto, da I. Joseph (*art. cit.*, pp. 111-156; pp. 218-254: testo arabo con traduzione). La versione in lingua curda fu pubblicata dall'Anastase Marie (*La découverte récente des deux livres sacrés des Yézidis* in „Anthropos” VI, 1911, pp. 1-39), il quale tuttavia, per la difficoltà di interpretare il testo curdo, diede una traduzione francese di una versione araba parimenti in suo possesso. Cfr. M. Bittner, *Die beiden heiligen Bücher der Jeziden im Lichte der Textkritik*, *ibid.*, pp. 628-639. Quest'ultimo studioso pubblicò più tardi una traduzione tedesca del testo curdo, con ampio commentario (*Die heiligen Bücher der Jeziden oder Teufelsanbeter (Kurdish und arabish)* in „Denkschriften der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien”, Phil.-hist. Kl., LV, IV-V, 1913). Bisogna ancora ricordare la traduzione francese del Nau (*Recueil de textes et de documents sur les Yézidis* in „Revue de l'Orient chrétien”, XX, 1915-17, pp. 156-162) e quella italiana, condotta sul testo arabo, del Furlani (*op. cit.*, pp. 71-91). Sulla composizione e l'età di questi scritti yezidici appaiono poco accettabili le conclusioni di A. Mingana (*Devil-Worshippers: their Beliefs and their Sacred Books* in „The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland”, 1916, pp. 505-512; 518-526).

5) R. Lescot, *Enquête sur les Yezidis de Syrie et du Djebel Sindjâr* (Mémoires de l'Institut français de Damas, 5), Beyrouth 1938, p. 57.

6) Cfr. Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

7) Cfr. W. B. Heard, *art. cit.*, pp. 200-219. L'autore dichiara di aver ricevuto informazioni sugli Yezidi da un funzionario del consolato inglese di Diarbekir, il quale aveva avuto contatti diretti con numerosi membri della comunità. Le notizie intorno alla cosmogonia, salvo alcuni particolari, si ricollegano alla tradizione

che le narrazioni cosmogoniche yezidiche, pur fondate su un comune sostrato religioso e presentando delle costanti sufficientemente chiare, mostrano delle differenze anche notevoli quanto alle modalità di azione dei personaggi e allo scenario della vicenda. Di conseguenza anche il significato storico-religioso di tali racconti risulta variamente caratterizzato; così che il giudizio complessivo sulla cosmogonia yezidica non può prescindere da un'analisi delle tradizioni a noi pervenute nè trascurare la presenza parallela e talvolta convergente in una medesima versione di temi mitici appellanti a concezioni religiose di tipo e origine diversa.

E' noto che lo yezidismo, definito da osservatori occidentali ovvero dalle popolazioni cristiane e musulmane conviventi nel medesimo ambito geografico come una religione di „adoratori del diavolo”, è stato ed è oggetto di contrastanti valutazioni in merito alla impostazione dualistica, che ad alcuni studiosi è apparsa come la sua caratteristica fondamentale mentre altri la escludono completamente⁸). Un contri-

riflessa nel *Libro nero* (art. cit., p. 205 sg.), della cui esistenza lo Heard era a conoscenza, pur non avendone preso visione (*ib.*, p. 215: „The Mēs-héfa-Rēsh give commentaries and explanations of their religion, lays down their ritual and ceremonies and contains the traditions and histories of the wars of the Yezidis, their superstitions and fabulous legends”). Anche la „Memoria di un sacerdote cattolico orientale”, tradotta dal siriano e pubblicata dal Giamil, conosce la seconda versione cosmogonica del *Libro nero* in forma sostanzialmente identica (*op. cit.*, p. 13 sgg.). Si noti che questo testo, in cui sono esposte in forma dialogica le credenze yezidiche, ignora l'esistenza di una tradizione scritta, che anzi viene esplicitamente negata (*ibid.*, p. 16 sg.: „... noi non abbiamo libri, perchè sono stati distrutti dal fuoco e dall'acqua; i nostri libri sono i nostri cuori”).

8) Tra questi ultimi il Furlani (*Testi religiosi dei Yezidi, passim*; cfr. Id., *L'antidualismo dei Yezidi, cit.*). La qualità tutt'altro che „diabolica” dell'Angelo Pavone, almeno nell'attualità e nel sentimento comune degli Yezidi, era stata riconosciuta già prima del Furlani. Cfr. N. Siouffi, art. cit., p. 254 n. 2; J. Spiro, *Les Yezidi ou les Adorateurs du Diable* in „Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie”, t. XII (1900), p. 296; Nau, art. cit., p. 144; M. Horten, *Die Geheimlehre der Jezidi, der sogenannten 'Teufelsanbeter'* in „Der neue Orient”, III (1918), pp. 105-107; Id., *Die Philosophie des Islam*, München 1924, p. 126 sg.; Th. Menzel, s.v. *Yazidi* in *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*, vol. IV, S. (1933), p. 2229; Id., s.v. *Yazidi* in A. J. Wensinck-J. H. Kramers, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*, Leiden 1941, p. 808; A. Dirr, art. cit., p. 563; Lescot, *op. cit.*, p. 48. Cfr. Furlani, *L'antidualismo dei Yezidi*, pp. 246-252.

Secondo Bausani „l'appellativo obbrobrioso di 'adoratori del diavolo' dato ai Yazidi può proprio essere dovuto ad antichi ricordi concreti e 'politici' di venerazione per un essere demoniaco come Yazīd, ancor più che alle complicate elucubrazioni su Malak Tā'ūs, che del resto gli Yazidi mai chiamano altro che con questo nome e non *Shaitān* o *Iblīs*” (art. cit., p. 247). Noteremo che presso la comunità

buto alla soluzione di tale problema e, di riflesso, alla migliore valutazione del fenomeno yezidico nella sua totalità, può essere offerto dall'esame dei miti cosmogonici nei quali, a diverso titolo e con diversa accentuazione, appare quella tensione di timbro dualistico fra la divinità somma e un personaggio „secondo”, per lo più Melek Tā'ūs, che vale a caratterizzare l'*ethos* dello yezidismo in una direzione tutta particolare, distinguendolo dal circostante ambiente islamico e cristiano.

Un criterio utile alla classificazione tipologica dei miti di creazione può essere dunque quello della misura e della intensità con cui il tema del contrasto è sottolineato nelle diverse versioni; il significato storico-religioso dei racconti cosmogonici yezidici, peraltro, non si esaurisce in questa tematica dualistica bensì contempla tutta una complessità di motivi, tra i quali occupa un posto di rilievo la nozione della Perla originaria, strumento o supporto della creazione.

I. LA PERLA-UOVO COSMICO

Il mito cosmogonico narrato nel *Libro nero* ⁹⁾ contempla uno scenario iniziale in cui avviene la creazione, da parte di Dio, di una „perla bianca dal suo prezioso seno” ¹⁰⁾ e di un uccello di nome Anfar, sul

degli Ahl-i Haqq, affine sotto alcuni profili a quella yezidica, anche se storicamente situata nel contesto dell'opposto estremismo, quello shiita, filo-alide, appaiono dei racconti relativi ad un originario contrasto fra Dio e Pīr Beniāmīn (ossia Gabriele), parimenti composto con il riconoscimento della superiorità del primo e con l'attribuzione al secondo di una condizione privilegiata al di sopra di tutte le creature, senza che peraltro sussista nelle fonti relative agli Ahl-i Haqq alcuna connotazione „satanica” della sétta. Vero è che Pīr Beniāmīn-Gabriele non ha nel sistema dei Fedeli di Verità quella centralità e rilevanza che Melek Tā'ūs occupa nel mondo religioso yezidico, dove questo personaggio assume spesso le funzioni e le caratteristiche del Dio sommo. Aggiungiamo che, secondo una notizia del Mokri, lo stesso Angelo Pavone (*Malak-tāwūs*) sarebbe oggetto di venerazione presso gli Ahl-i Haqq del Gurani, essendo identificato con l'angelo Michele (*Mikā'il* o *Dāwūd*). A quest'ultimo sono parimenti attribuite facoltà demiurgiche e la qualità di „guida” delle vicende del mondo, espressa nell'appellativo di *čarxa-či* („colui che fa muovere”); ma l'importanza di questo personaggio nel panorama religioso della sétta è piuttosto scarsa (*Le Chasseur de Dieu et le mythe du Roi-Aigle*, Wiesbaden 1967, p. 44).

9) Seguiamo la traduzione del Furlani relativa, come si è detto, al testo arabo (*op. cit.*, pp. 82-91), riservandoci di notare le varianti più significative nella traduzione degli altri studiosi.

10) Il Furlani avverte che il significato letterale dell'espressione araba è „dal suo mistero prezioso” (*op. cit.*, p. 82 nota 2). Il Joseph traduce: „In the beginning God created the White Pearl out of his most precious essence” (*art. cit.*, p. 221; cfr. Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 377), frase, quest'ultima, cui corrisponde nell'Anatase „de son

quale Dio pone la Perla, dimorando quindi sopra di essa per quarantamila anni. Secondo la versione orale riferita dallo Heard „per quarantamila anni lo spirito di Dio covò sopra questo gioiello”¹¹). L’espressione qui usata, mentre da una parte allude probabilmente alla rappresentazione, nota da altre fonti yezidiche, di Dio in figura di uccello¹²), dall’altra sembra mostrare che all’immagine della perla si sovrappone o comunque si avvicina quella dell’uovo, per alcuni versi analoga, almeno sotto il profilo della funzione cosmogonica che ad entrambe può essere attribuita. Il mito yezidico, nella forma enunciata nel *Libro nero*, sviluppa di fatto la tematica dell’„uovo cosmico”, sia pure utilizzando l’immagine parallela della perla. Si narra dunque che, trascorso il periodo indicato, Dio procede alla creazione dei sette angeli, uno per ciascun giorno della settimana a partire dalla domenica in cui viene creato „un angelo dal nome ‘Azrā’il: esso è il Pavone angelo, il capo di tutti”¹³). Poi „egli creò la forma dei sette cieli, la terra, il sole e la luna”, mentre l’ultimo degli angeli, Nūrā’il creò l’uomo, gli animali, gli uccelli, le bestie e li pose nelle tasche della tonaca”¹⁴).

propre fond mystérieux et impénétrable” (*art. cit.*, p. 36) e in quella del Nau „de sa très précieuse essence (de son sein)” (*art. cit.*, p. 159). Il Bittner (*Die beiden heiligen Bücher*, p. 634) avverte che il senso letterale dell’espressione araba è „aus seinem (ihm) lieben (teuren) Geheimnisse (Schosse)” e di quella corrispondente curda „aus seinem geliebten Geheimnisse (Schosse)” (cfr. *Id.*, *Die heiligen Bücher*, p. 26). Sembra dunque che il senso fondamentale del testo yezidico sia quello dell’origine della Perla dalla sostanza medesima di Dio, dall’impenetrabile essenza divina. Nella versione orale del mito attestata dallo Heard non appare invece questa sorta di „consustanzialità” fra la Perla e il Creatore. Si dice infatti che Dio, „nella sua sapienza infinita, creò un gioiello” (*art. cit.*, p. 205).

11) *Art. cit.*, p. 205. Cfr. Anastase, *art. cit.*, p. 36: „Il créa ensuite un oiseau appelé ‘Ānfer’; et plaça la grosse perle sur son dos, et lui se mit dessus (la couva?) pendant quarante mille ans”; Nau, *art. cit.*, p. 159.

12) Anche nel *Gen.* I, 2, del resto, l’immagine dello Spirito di Dio muoventesi sulle acque è espressa col verbo *rahaf*, traducibile anche con covare”.

13) Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 82, 2. Gli altri angeli saranno Dardā’il, Isrāfā’il, Mikā’il, Ġibrā’il, Samnā’il, Nūrā’il (*ib.*, p. 83, 3-8). I nomi dei sette angeli talvolta variano in altri documenti yezidici ovvero nelle altre redazioni dello stesso mito (cfr. Joseph, *art. cit.*, p. 221; Heard, *art. cit.*, p. 205; Bittner, *Die beiden heiligen Bücher*, p. 635). E’ stato notato che la connessione di ciascun angelo con un giorno della settimana verosimilmente allude ad un carattere „astrale” dei personaggi e si riconnette alla credenza babilonese dei sette dēi planetari (Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 82 n. 5).

14) Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 83, 10 sg.; cfr. Bittner, *art. cit.*, p. 635; *Id.*, *Die heiligen Bücher*, p. 27. Nella traduzione del Joseph il significato di queste linee risulta alquanto modificato per un uso diverso della punteggiatura. Infatti, se la creazione dell’uomo e degli animali è parimenti attribuita a Nūrā’il, l’atto di riporre queste creature „nelle tasche della veste” è piuttosto attribuito a Dio. Il testo tradotto

Queste affermazioni, per le quali tutta la creazione sembrerebbe già compiuta, a prima vista appaiono in contraddizione con il seguito del racconto, in cui si descriveranno i successivi momenti della medesima come precisi atti di un completo disegno divino. Ci si chiede allora quale sia l'esatto significato di quelle espressioni, a meno di non volerle intendere come una pura e semplice anticipazione sintetica del racconto cosmogonico che segue. E' rivelatrice a tal proposito la frase con cui si conclude questa prima presentazione dell'attività creatrice di Dio e che il Furlani traduce: „Egli si levò dalla Perla e con lui erano angeli”¹⁵). Joseph invece ha: „Egli uscì fuori dalla Perla accompagnato dagli angeli”¹⁶). Da questa versione si deduce che la formazione degli angeli e la creazione del mondo sono avvenute all'interno della Perla originaria o comunque, se si accoglie piuttosto l'interpretazione del Furlani, in uno stadio che contemplava ancora la dimora di Dio sopra la Perla medesima. In ogni caso, come sembra risultare dall'espressione iniziale già citata („egli creò la forma dei sette cieli”¹⁷), si tratta di una sorta di creazione allo stato „ideale” di quelli che saranno gli elementi del mondo visibile¹⁸). Si avrebbe allora, sia pure espressa in forma allusiva e priva di ulteriori sviluppi in senso

dal Browne, invece, presenta Dio stesso come creatore dell'uomo e degli animali all'interno della Perla (*op. cit.*, p. 377).

15) *Op. cit.*, p. 83, II.

16) *Art. cit.*, p. 222. Cfr. anche Browne (*op. cit.*, p. 377): „... and arose from the Pearl, accompanied by angels”; Bittner, *Die heiligen Bücher*, p. 27: „... und mit den Engeln kam er aus der Perle heraus”, dove il personaggio agente è Fa-ad-din, al quale è attribuita la funzione demiurgica. Il Lescot, sintetizzando il racconto cosmogonico del *Mishefa Reş* („Libro Nero”) dalle diverse redazioni del testo, riferisce che „Dieu créa, en sept jours, sept anges (dont les noms varient avec les différents textes du Livre), puis il façonna une énorme perle blanche au centre de la quelle il s'isola durant quarante mille ans. Au terme de cette période, il brisa la perle, dont les éclats formèrent la terre, le cieux, la mer etc.” (*op. cit.*, p. 55 sg.). Da questa esposizione il seguito degli avvenimenti appare alquanto mutato, essendo menzionata la creazione degli angeli come anteriore alla formazione della Perla, la quale da parte sua è esplicitamente presentata quale ricettacolo di Dio.

17) Cfr. Bittner, *art. cit.*, p. 27: „Hernach erschuf er das Bild der sieben Himmel und die Erde und die Sonne und den Mond”. La versione araba tradotta dallo Anastase, tuttavia, dice semplicemente: „Dieu créa ensuite les sept cieux, la terre, le soleil et la lune” (*art. cit.*, p. 36, X).

18) Ciò appare confermato dalla traduzione dello stesso brano data dall'Anastase: „*Faxr-ed-Din* créa a son tour l'homme, les animaux, les oiseaux et les bêtes fauves. Il les plaça ensuite dans les poches de son vêtement, et il sorti ainsi de la grosse perle, accompagné d'une multitude d'anges” (*art. cit.*, p. 36, XI).

dottrinario, una concezione affine a quella ben più complessa ed ampiamente articolata presente presso gli Ahl-i Haqq (i „Fedeli di Verità”), dove appunto la realtà conosce due momenti, l'uno a livello „ideale”, invisibile, e l'altro a livello visibile, mundano ¹⁹). Il riferimento comparativo alle dottrine dei Fedeli di Verità è tanto più legittimo in quanto anche in esse ricorre il simbolismo della Perla primordiale, sebbene con significato in parte diverso da quello che emerge dal testo yezidico che andiamo esaminando ²⁰).

In quest'ultimo il racconto procede facendo risultare con tutta immediatezza il valore cosmogonico della Perla che, al grido di Dio, si spacca in quattro parti lasciando uscire l'acqua del mare.” Il mondo di qua — si afferma — era rotondo senza perforature” ²¹). Gibrā'il, in forma di uccello, per ordine divino forma „i quattro angoli della terra” ²²),

19) Cfr. Nûr Ali-Shâh Elâhi, *L'ésotérisme kurde. Aperçu sur le secret gnostique des Fidèles de Vérité*, Traduction, introduction, commentaires et notes par le Dr. M. Mokri, Paris 1966, pp. 13-19.

20) Se poi, accogliendo la traduzione del Bittner, del Joseph e dell'Anastase, si ritiene che la „prima creazione” compiuta da Dio di cui trattano i paragrafi 2-11 commentati, sia avvenuta all'interno della Perla, l'affinità fra i contesti yezidico ed ahl-i haqq risulterebbe rafforzata, essendo presente in quest'ultimo proprio il carattere della Perla come dimora del Dio sommo e ricettacolo della creazione degli esseri angelici (vedi oltre). In ogni modo, in base alle considerazioni fatte, non è illegittimo interpretare le affermazioni del *Libro nero* come riferentisi ad una prima formazione, in uno stadio invisibile, degli elementi della creazione. Il tutto peraltro espresso in termini folklorici e scarsamente speculativi. Si pensi all'immagine dell'uomo e degli animali posti „nelle tasche della tonaca”!

21) Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 83, 11. Secondo questa traduzione si avrebbe l'idea di un mondo circolare e senza aperture. Cfr. Anastase, *art. cit.*, p. 36, XI: „La terre était ronde et sans fissure”; Bittner, *Die heiligen Bücher*, p. 27. Il Joseph traduce invece: „The world was round, and was not divided” (*art. cit.*, p. 222), con espressione che, oltre l'idea della rotondità, sottolinea quella della indistinzione delle parti che poi saranno divise. Cfr. anche Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 377: „The world was round, without corners (?)”. La versione orale riferita dallo Heard è in parte diversa, alquanto più semplice nelle sue linee generali (*art. cit.*, p. 205), pur mantenendo la nozione della rilevanza cosmogonica del „gioiello” che, al grido di Dio, si spacca in sette parti, facendo uscire i mari e gli oceani.

22) Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 83 sg., 12. Cfr. Joseph, *art. cit.*, p. 222; Anastase, *art. cit.*, p. 36, XII. L'idea, qui espressa in forma alquanto oscura, è enunciata in termini chiari nella versione orale dello Heard: „In quel tempo la terra era rotonda o circolare, ma Dio inviò Jibrail in forma di uccello e gli comandò di farlo quadrato e di stabilirlo saldo al suo posto” (*loc. cit.*). Il Bittner avverte che il testo arabo e il suo parallelo curdo vanno tradotti piuttosto: „... und in seine Hand legte er die vier Ecken der Erde” (*Die beiden heiligen Bücher*, p. 635; cfr. Id., *Die heiligen Bücher*, p. 27). Il Browne traduceva: „Then He created Gabriel in the form of a bird, and committed to his hands the deposition of the four corners” (*op. cit.*, p. 377).

mentre Dio, creata una nave, vi dimora per trentamila anni. Trascorso questo tempo, „egli andò e si stabilì a Lāliš. Poi egli gridò nel mondo di qua e fece pietrificare le pietre. Il mondo al di qua divenne terra e cominciò a tremare. Egli comandò a Gibrā'il circa due pezzi della perla bianca e pose uno sotto la terra e l'altro nella porta del cielo. Poi egli fece con essi il sole, la luna e creò le stelle dai pezzettini dispersi della perla bianca e le appese al cielo ad ornamento". Segue la creazione di piante ed alberi, oltre che la formazione dei monti „a scopo di decorazione della terra", mentre il cielo viene sospeso sulla terra quale trono di Dio ²³).

La Perla originaria del mito yezidico, intesa come vero e proprio strumento cosmogonico, equivale a quello che in altri complessi religiosi è il ben noto motivo dell'uovo cosmico. La Perla infatti non è soltanto la dimora di Dio, il quale, risiedendo su di essa, crea gli esseri invisibili (angeli) e probabilmente, se il testo è da intendere nel senso proposto, opera anche una prima „ideale" formazione del mondo; ma la Perla, con il suo aprirsi permette inoltre la fuoriuscita delle acque originarie, da cui emerge poi la terra solida. Quanto al valore cosmogonico dei frammenti della Perla, si noterà che, mentre nella traduzione del Furlani sopra riferita dalle due parti, poste rispettivamente nel cielo e sotto la terra, hanno origine il sole e la luna, in quella del Joseph si afferma piuttosto che esse costituiscono il supporto dei due elementi cosmici, in cui sole e luna vengono fissati ²⁴). Secondo la versione orale del medesimo racconto nota allo Heard, una parte del „gioiello" fu posta da Gibrā'il sotto la terra, mentre „dall'altra egli fece la porta del cielo. Poi fissò il sole e la luna nei loro posti" ²⁵).

Diverso infine risulta il senso del brano cosmogonico nella traduzione proposta dall'Anastase, attribuendosi a Gabriele quelle funzioni demiurgiche che sono piuttosto da ritenere compiute da Dio ²⁶); comun-

²³) Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 84, 12 sg.

²⁴) *Art. cit.*, p. 222: „At this time he commanded Gabriel to bring two pieces of the White Pearl; one he placed beneath the earth, the other stayed at the gate of heaven. He then placed in them the sun and the moon". Cfr. Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 377: „Then he commanded Gabriel to take two of pieces of the White Pearl, one of which He placed under the earth, while the other rested in the Gate of Heaven. Then He placed in them the sun and the moon". Così anche in Bittner, *Die heiligen Bücher*, p. 28 sg.

²⁵) *Art. cit.*, p. 206.

²⁶) Nella versione orale riferita dallo Heard l'attribuzione di tali facoltà a Dio è chiarissima, mentre Gibrā'il, in questa seconda fase cosmogonica, ha soltanto il

que, in relazione alla questione che ora ci riguarda, essa conferma il carattere di „sostegno” assunto dai frammenti della Perla, piuttosto che la loro trasformazione in sole e luna ²⁷). Uniforme è invece l'affermazione che le stelle derivano dagli altri, piccoli frammenti della Perla originaria ²⁸), la cui precisa funzione cosmogonica risulta pertanto confermata, risolvendosi essa in alcuni elementi costitutivi di questo mondo.

Tale funzione è parimenti sottolineata nella seconda versione del mito di creazione offerta dal medesimo trattato. Esso, infatti, nella parte conclusiva ritorna sul tema delle origini, rivelando una tradizione parzialmente affine a quella già esaminata, pur con varianti anche sostanziali.

Si dice dunque che, quando ancora non esisteva altro che il mare primordiale, Dio si muoveva in esso con una nave ²⁹); poi egli „creò da se stesso una perla e regnò sopra di essa quaranta anni” ³⁰). Adirato

compito di portare le due parti della Perla di cui Dio stesso si servirà allo scopo già descritto. Nelle traduzioni del Browne, del Furlani e del Joseph, parimenti, il pronome di terza persona („egli”) è da riferire al Dio sommo. Bittner, da parte sua, rifiutando l'interpretazione dell'Anastase, nega che il testo arabo e quello parallelo curdo autorizzino a considerare Gabriele il protagonista dell'azione demiurgica (*Die beiden heiligen Bücher*, p. 635).

27) „Alors Gabriel (leggi: „egli”, sc. „Dio”) prit un morceau de la perle, et le plaça sous la terre pour la raffermir, et en mit un autre à la porte du ciel pour l'orner. C'est dans cette fraction de perle que se trouvent enchassés le soleil et la lune” (*art. cit.*, p. 36, XII).

28) „And from the scattered pieces of the White Pearl he created the stars which he hung in heaven as ornaments” (Joseph, *art. cit.*, p. 222). Cfr. Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 377: „...and created the stars from their fragments”; Anastase, *art. cit.*, p. 36, XII: „Puis il parsema autour de ces deux luminaires une poudre provenant de la brisure de la perle, ce qui forma les étoiles du firmament. Le tout est suspendu au ciel”. Heard, *art. cit.*, p. 206; Bittner, *Die heiligen Bücher*, p. 29.

29) Il motivo delle acque originarie e della nave di Dio, già presente nella prima versione cosmogonica del *Libro nero*, ritornerà in altre tradizioni yezidiche, rivelandosi una delle tematiche più ricorrenti di questo composito mondo mitico.

30) Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 89, 28-29. Nel manoscritto utilizzato dal Joseph questo secondo racconto è introdotto come espressione della rivelazione divina elargita agli Yezidi (*art. cit.*, p. 224). Il manoscritto siro-caldeo tradotto dal Giamil riferisce il mito in questi termini: „Dio creò il cielo e la terra, e stava sulla superficie delle acque dei mari... Egli aveva costruita una barca, perciò galleggiava sulla superficie dei mari, divertendosi e godendo in se stesso... Egli creò una perla per sé, e la dominò per 40 anni, dopo i quali disgustatosi con essa la spaccò. Oh! gran miracolo! Spaccata la perla ne uscirono fuori tuoni e fulmini, e, dalla voce di questa rottura, i tuoni divennero grandi colline, e i fulmini alte montagne, e dal fumo che ne uscì si formarono i cieli” (*op. cit.*, p. 13 sg.).

Dio calpestò la Perla e „dal suo rumore sorsero i monti e dal suo fracasso le colline e dal suo fumo il cielo” ³¹⁾).

Sebbene non si parli di una trasformazione diretta della Perla negli elementi cosmici menzionati (monti, colline, cielo), l'affermazione che essi hanno avuto origine in conseguenza dell'apertura di quella e precisamente da fenomeni prodotti dalla Perla nel suo frantumarsi (rumore, fumo), rivela che all'immagine alquanto folklorica e colorita della Perla calpestata in un momento d'ira divina soggiace in realtà la nozione dell'uovo cosmogonico che con la sua apertura dà luogo al dispiegarsi della creazione ³²⁾. Tale nozione, di fatto, è chiaramente espressa in una terza versione cosmogonica contenuta in un testo siriano composto dal monaco nestoriano Ramicho' (1452 d. Cr.), pubblicato e tradotto dal Nau ³³⁾. Tale testo offre una breve esposizione delle credenze yezidiche, in cui si afferma: „Dio esistette da solo; ma avendo un giorno in mano una perla a forma di mela con la quale giocava, gli cadde di mano, si spezzò e formò così questa terra e il cielo: trecento dèi derivarono dalla perla spezzata” ³⁴⁾.

31) Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 89 sg., 29-30; cfr. Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 379; Joseph, *art. cit.*, p. 224. L'Anastase traduce: „Le bruit formidable occasionné par la brisure fit dresser les montagnes; le petit bruit donna naissance aux collines; et les vapeurs qui s'en dégagèrent produisirent le ciel” (*art. cit.*, p. 39, XXX). Per considerazioni di critica testuale e problemi di traduzione relativi a questo brano cfr. Bittner, *Die beiden heiligen Bücher*, p. 637 sg.

32) Il testo continua narrando la creazione di quelli che nella prima versione erano sei angeli e che qui vengono chiamati „i sei dèi”; essi sono formati dall'essenza e dalla luce divina, in un processo di tipo emanativo, quale è sottolineato dall'immagine di accendere una lampada dall'altra, usata per esemplificare l'azione di Dio (Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 90, 32; cfr. Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 380; Joseph, *art. cit.*, p. 224; Anastase, *art. cit.*, p. 39, XXXII; Bittner, *Die heiligen Bücher*, p. 37; Nau, *art. cit.*, p. 162). Avviene poi la creazione del sole, della luna, dell'orizzonte, della stella del mattino e dell'atmosfera, compiuta da ciascuno dei „sei dèi” menzionati (Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 91, 33; Joseph, *loc. cit.*). Cfr. anche Giamil, *op. cit.*, p. 14 sg.: dopo aver sospeso il cielo sulla terra senza uso di colonne, Dio „creò altri sei Dèi di sua essenza e luce come una persona accende la propria candela da quella di un'altra”. Tali personaggi procedono al completamento della creazione.

33) *Art. cit.*, pp. 172-185 (testo siriano), pp. 185-200 (traduzione); sulla storia del testo cfr. *ib.*, p. 146 sg.

34) Nau, *art. cit.*, 198. Ad una simile tradizione mitica si fa riferimento nel manoscritto arabo pubblicato dal Joseph, il quale contiene una introduzione, una trascrizione dei testi sacri (*Libro della Rivelazione* e *Libro nero*) e una Appendice. In quest'ultima, che riferisce fra l'altro varie notizie sulle credenze e pratiche yezidiche, si legge: „Mention is made in some of their books that the First Cause ist the Supreme God, who before he created this world, was enjoying himself

Appare qui il motivo folklorico del „divertimento” di Dio³⁵) e insieme l'idea che il mondo sia venuto all'esistenza in seguito ad un avvenimento fortuito, un incidente, come risultava già dalla versione mitica sopra riferita, in cui l'ira del creatore è causa del frantumarsi della Perla. Quest'ultima, secondo la notizia del testo siriano, con la sua apertura dà luogo al cielo e alla terra³⁶) e rivela pertanto la propria qualità di strumento cosmogonico, assolvendo una funzione in tutto analoga a quella che, in altri contesti, è attribuita all'uovo cosmico.

Come è noto, l'idea di un uovo originario si esprime con varietà di particolari e ricchezza d'immagini in numerosi miti presenti sia in ambiente etnologico che in ambiente culto³⁷). Pur limitando l'indagine a

over the seas; and in his hand was a great White Pearl, with which he was playing. Then he resolved to cast it into the sea, and when he did so this world came in to being” (*art. cit.*, p. 240). In termini pressochè identici una siffatta notizia era stata riferita dal Browne, nel contesto della presentazione delle dottrine yezidiche che precede la traduzione dei due testi sacri (*op. cit.*, p. 369).

35) Vedi anche *Libro nero*, cap. 28 (seconda versione cosmogonica) in Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 89; Joseph, *art. cit.*, p. 224. Così nella notizia del Giamil (*op. cit.*, p. 14).

36) Il testo citato menziona trecento dèi i quali sarebbero usciti dall'involucro della Perla. Ciò sembra confermare l'interpretazione sopra proposta, secondo cui la prima creazione (in questo caso relativa solo agli esseri angelici) sarebbe avvenuta all'interno della Perla.

37) Cfr. M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris 1948 (tr. it., Torino 1957, 2a ed.), pp. 427-431; Id., *Structure et fonction du mythe cosmogonique in La naissance du monde* (Sources orientales, I), Paris 1959, pp. 479-483. Tra i miti cosmogonici primitivi che sviluppano la concezione di un uovo originario, basterà ricordare, in un contesto culturale e geografico ben lontano dal nostro, il mito polinesiano di Ta'aroa, „l'Unico”, „l'Antenato di tutti gli dèi”, dimorante all'interno di una conchiglia, la quale „era come un uovo ruotante nello spazio”. Da quest'involucro viene formato il cielo mentre da una seconda conchiglia Ta'aroa fa „il gran fondamento del mondo e la roccia di base e il suolo del mondo” (R. Pettazzoni, *Miti e Leggende*, vol. II. *Oceania*, a cura di V. Lanternari, Torino 1963, p. 378 sgg., n° 211; cfr. Eliade, *Traité*, p. 427; Fr. K. Numazawa, *Die Weltanfänge in der japanischen Mythologie*, Paris-Luzern, 1946, p. 310).

Più vicino alla tipologia dell'uovo cosmogonico che dal suo guscio dà origine alla creazione è un mito dell'isola di Nauru (Micronesia), secondo il quale il primo essere vivente, insinuatosi all'interno di una conchiglia vagante nel mare primordiale, dentro di essa forma la luna, il sole, il mare, mentre dalle due valve aperte costituisce il cielo e la terra (Pettazzoni, *op. cit.*, p. 598 sgg., n° 326; cfr. E. Lehmann s.v. *Cosmogonia* (*Le cosmogonie dei primitivi*) in *Enciclopedia Italiana*, vol. XI, 1931, p. 582). In un mito degli Iban (Borneo nord-occidentale) il tema dell'uovo, principio di creazione, appare in una forma alquanto diversa, combinato col tema del pescaggio operato nel mare primordiale da due „spiriti creatori” in figura di uccelli. Le sostanze pescate sono due, in forma di uova di pollo: dall'una viene formato il cielo e dall'altra la terra (Pettazzoni, *ib.*, p. 53 sg., n° 27;

quelle culture che storicamente e geograficamente sono più vicine al mondo yezidico, si noterà la diffusione notevole, in epoche e contesti religiosi diversi, della tematica in oggetto ³⁸). Tuttavia il mito yezidico, a differenza dei contesti cosmogonici utilizzando l'immagine dell'uovo primordiale, presenta la nozione di un Dio trascendente creatore, il quale preesiste alla Perla e, dopo averla formata, agisce su di essa dall'esterno. Tale azione ora si esprime in forme colorite e folkloriche (Dio che calpesta la Perla ovvero la lascia cadere nel mare) ora si realizza attraverso un „gridare” che, se per un verso è riconducibile alla tematica biblica e coranica della parola come espressione della volontà creatrice di Dio, dall'altra rimanda ad una tipologia molto diffusa nei più diversi ambienti religiosi ³⁹).

cfr. Eliade, *De Zalmoxis à Gengis-Khan. Études comparatives sur les religions et le folklore de la Dacie et de l'Europe orientale*, Paris 1970, p. 121). Il tema dell'uovo cosmico è presente in Indonesia (A. H. Krappe, *Mythologie universelle*, Paris 1930, p. 397; Numazawa, *op. cit.*, p. 310; Eliade, *Traité*, p. 427), in Africa occidentale presso i Pangwe (Krappe, *op. cit.*, p. 371 n. 1; H. Baumann, *Schöpfung und Urzeit des Menschen im Mythos der Afrikanischen Völker*, Berlin 1936, p. 105, p. 127, p. 191 sgg.; Numazawa, *op. cit.*, p. 310 sg., p. 368; Eliade, *loc. cit.*), nell'America centrale e meridionale e in Europa nella mitologia finnica (Numazawa, *op. cit.*, p. 309 sg.), dove peraltro esso sarebbe dovuto ad influenza indiana (Krappe, *op. cit.*, p. 414). Anche la cosmogonia giapponese quale è esposta nel Nihongi (VIII sec. d. Cr.) conosce l'immagine dell'uovo, usata per esprimere l'unità degli elementi primordiali dalla cui divisione sono stati prodotti cielo e terra (Cfr. M. Revon s.v. *Cosmogony and Cosmology [Japanese]* in J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Edimburgo, vol. IV, 1911, p. 163. Una dottrina analoga è enunciata in un testo cosmogonico cinese del III sec. d. Cr. (cfr. M. Kaltenmark, *La naissance du monde en Chine* in *La naissance du monde*, p. 456). Sulla dottrina dell'uovo cosmico in Giappone e in Cina cfr. Numazawa, *op. cit.*, p. 82 sg.; pp. 308-311, dove si adducono i paralleli da altre culture. Altri riferimenti alla nozione dell'uovo cosmico in diverse mitologie *ibid.*, p. 368 sgg.; pp. 420-426.

38) Cfr. *Appendice*.

39) Presso la setta gnostica dei Mandeï, ancora rappresentata da piccoli gruppi stanziati nell'Iraq meridionale e pertanto geograficamente contigua alle sedi attuali di alcune comunità yezidiche, la manifestazione delle entità del mondo pleromatico avviene attraverso „chiamate” successive da parte del Grande Mana. Si veda, ad esempio, *Ginza di Destra III*, 70, 1 sgg. (M. Lidzbarski, *Ginza. Der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer*, Göttingen 1925, p. 66 sg. Cfr. K. Rudolph, *Theogonie, Kosmogonie und Anthropogonie in den mandäischen Schriften*, Göttingen 1965, p. 19). In un *Inno mandeo* la entità somma, racchiusa in un „uovo” (*hībuna*), attraverso „grida” successive crea innumerevoli Uthras (E. S. Drower, *The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans*, Leiden 1959, p. 292: *Inno* 379). La nozione del „grido creante”, del resto, era stata recepita nell'ambito dell'ismaismo e risulta attestata nell'*Ummu 'l-Kitâb*, dove sono stati individuati molti elementi di chiara derivazione gnostico-manichea (cfr. Bausani, *Persia religiosa*, Milano 1959, pp. 181-190).

Se dunque la Perla originaria del mito yezidico, per la sua funzione cosmogonica, rivela indubbie connessioni con la fenomenologia dell'uovo cosmico che in India e in Grecia trova le espressioni più elaborate e rilevanti ⁴⁰), essa si situa peraltro in un contesto di tipo creazionistico, nell'ambito del quale riceve il suo specifico valore e significato quale strumento di un'attività demiurgica esplicata da un essere divino personale e dai suoi collaboratori angelici.

Un parallelo per una concezione siffatta è offerto dalle tradizioni cosmogoniche degli Ahl-i Haqq, membri di una di quelle sette-popolo che sono fiorite nell'ambito di un Islam fortemente tinto di ismailismo e che, come gli Yezidi, con i quali vivono in stretta contiguità geografica, appartengono in gran parte all'*ethnos* curdo ⁴¹). In queste tradizioni è presente il tema delle acque primordiali nelle quali si trova una Perla, dimora del sommo Dio ancora non manifestato. Se in qualche testo si presenta la divinità come racchiusa, fin dall'inizio, nell'involucro della Perla ⁴²), ovvero della conchiglia ⁴³), sicchè sembra affermata la primordialità assoluta di questo elemento e la sua contemporaneità *ab aeterno* rispetto a Dio ⁴⁴), in altri testi la trascendenza e l'antiorità

40) Cfr. *Appendice*, pp. oo.

41) La letteratura relativa ai Fedeli di Verità illustra sufficientemente la fisionomia religiosa di questa interessante setta. Un contributo essenziale alla conoscenza delle dottrine ahl-i haqq è offerto dagli studi del Mokri, ad alcuni dei quali faremo più oltre riferimento. Cfr. anche Müller, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-132; Bau-sani, *art. cit.*, pp. 238-242.

42) *Shâhnâma-ye Haqîqat* (dist. 582-587) in Mokri, *La naissance du monde chez les Kurdes Ahl-e Haqq* in „Trudy XXV Meždunarodnogo Kongressa Vostokovedov”, t. II, Mosca 1963, p. 160 (cfr. Id., *Le symbole de la Perle dans le Folklore persan et chez les Kurdes Fidèles de Vérité (Ahl-e Haqq)* in „J.A.”, CCXLVIII, 1960, p. 477; Id., *L'ésotérisme kurde*, p. 13 sg.) „... Non c'era nell'esistenza altra creatura che la Verità suprema unica, vivente e adorabile. La sua dimora era nella Perla e la sua essenza era nascosta. La Perla era nella conchiglia e la conchiglia era nel mare e le onde del mare coprivano tutto”. Una nozione analoga sembra espressa nel *Dawra-y Dâmyârî*, là dove Binyâmîn dichiara: „Il mio signore è Allâh, il mio *dâm* („laccio”) è un dardo. Io sono andato incontro a lui nell'oceano in cui giaceva la Perla. Noi abbiamo forato la Perla. Io ho attirato a me il mio signore” (cap. 29 in Mokri, *Le Chasseur de Dieu*, p. 62). Cfr. *ibid.*, cap. 186 in Mokri, *op. cit.*, p. 102: „Il cacciatore Binyâmîn possiede un *dâm* per l'agguato. In quel luogo, lo ha teso verso la Perla. Ha catturato l'Aquila reale (= Dio)”.

43) Trattato persiano del derviscio Golshîr Sabzavâri in Mokri, *La naissance du monde*, p. 160 (cfr. Id., *Le symbole de la Perle*, p. 477; *L'ésotérisme kurde*, p. 14): „Nel giorno in cui non c'era nè Terra nè Cielo, il re del mondo era una gemma nella conchiglia”.

44) Così anche nel trattato in versi dello Sheikh Amîr (cfr. Mokri, *Cinquante-*

di quest'ultimo rispetto alla sua dimora sono esplicitamente sottolineate. Si afferma infatti che „il Creatore dell'Universo, all'inizio della creazione, per la sua perfetta Potenza creò una Perla”⁴⁵), ovvero si esprime la priorità di Dio rispetto ad ogni elemento creato con l'immagine del suo introdursi, in figura di uccello dalle ali d'oro, nella Perla medesima⁴⁶). Rimane comunque essenziale l'idea che la Perla originaria,

deux versets de Cheikh Amîr en dialecte gûrânî in „J.A.”, CCXLIV, 1956, p. 394, 1-2) si dice che alle origini, quando nulla esisteva „non c'era che il mio Re in una Perla e la Perla nel mare. Non c'era rumore. Non c'era tumulto nè rumore. Il mio Re fu qualche tempo nella Perla. Egli ebbe origine in una dimora di cui nessuno conosceva il segreto”. L'idea di un „involucro” che racchiude le entità divine è familiare al mandeismo, dove spesso è menzione dell'Uovo (*hîlbuna*) come dimora degli esseri del mondo spirituale. Cfr. *G.D.* V, I [134] in Lidzbarski, *op. cit.*, p. 151, 2 e 10 (Id., *Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer*, Giessen 1915, p. 24 n. 6); *G.D.*, V, I, [135, 13-136, 1 sgg.] in Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, p. 151, 22 e p. 152, 19 sg.; *ib.*, IX, II [235, 21 sgg.] in Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, p. 236, 31 sg.; *ib.*, XVII, I [373] in Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, p. 401, 32 sgg.; *G.S.* I, IV, [26, 1] in Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, p. 443, 20. Anche nel *Libro di Giovanni* spesso è ricordato l'*hîlbuna*, ricettacolo degli esseri spirituali (59, 220 in Lidzbarski, *Das Johannesbuch*, p. 208, 17; 62, 232 *ibid.*, p. 214, 8; 68, 251 *ibid.*, p. 228, 7; 71, 259 *ibid.*, p. 233, 9) e parimenti negli *Imni* (CCCLXXVI in E. S. Drower, *The Canonical Prayerbook*, p. 277 e p. 282; CCCLXXVII, *ibid.*, p. 282; CCCLXXIX, *ibid.*, p. 292 e p. 304). Cfr. Rudolph, *op. cit.*, p. 25, p. 46 sgg. Sulla funzione teogonica dell'„uovo” mando cfr. *ibid.*, p. 340; *Id.*, *Die Religion der Mandäer* in H. Gese-M. Höfner-K. Rudolph, *Die Religionen Altsyriens, Altarabiens und der Mandäer*, Stuttgart 1970, p. 418.

45) Trattato persiano *Tadkerat ol a'lâ* (pp. 6-8) in Mokri, *La naissance du monde*, p. 160 e p. 162 (cfr. Id., *Le symbole de la Perle*, p. 477 sg.; *L'ésotérisme kurde*, p. 14 e p. 18; *Cinquante-deux versets*, p. 405 sg.). Si veda anche il *Dawra-y Dâmyârî*, 28 in Mokri, *Le Chasseur de Dieu*, p. 62 (Dio parla agli angeli): „Noi abbiamo messo la Perla in questo oceano, in questo mare. Binyâmin l'ha portata intatta”.

46) Raccolta di poemi dello Sheikh Amîr (Ms. p. 42) in Mokri, *La naissance du monde*, p. 160 (cfr. Id., *Le symbole de la Perle*, p. 477; *L'ésotérisme kurde*, p. 14; *Cinquante-deux versets*, p. 405): „Quando il mio Re (Dio) era in tanto che *Yâ*, non c'era nè Terra nè Cielo nè Venere, nè la voce di alcuno. Dio, sotto l'aspetto di un uccello dalle ali d'oro, venne a gettarsi nel Grano puro (= Perla)”. Cfr. il trattato di *'Alam-e Haqîqat* in Mokri, *La naissance du monde*, p. 161 (cfr. Id., *Le symbole de la Perle*, p. 477 sg.; *L'ésotérisme kurde*, p. 15): „Egli entrò nel seno dell'Oceano della Perla. Vi restò durante settantamila anni. La Perla era in fondo al mare, nutrita di segreto”. Nel medesimo trattato, composto dal derviscio Başar Bozhûî (manoscritto inedito, p. 3), in un altro passo si descrive una situazione analoga (*apud* Mokri, *La naissance du monde*, p. 166; *L'ésotérisme kurde*, p. 25): „Dio creò quattro angeli nel seno del Segreto e Lui stesso penetrò all'interno del mare della Perla. Rimase settantamila anni nel seno della Perla e la Perla era in fondo al mare, nutrita di Segreto”. Cfr. anche il *Dawra-y Dâmyârî*, 21 (*apud* Mokri, *Le Chasseur de Dieu*, p. 60) dove il „Re”, rivolgendosi agli angeli, esclama: „Insieme siamo andati nella Perla”; risulterebbe in tal modo l'anteriorità dei personaggi rispetto al loro „ricettacolo”.

sia essa evocata nei testi insieme con la divinità ovvero presentata quale prima espressione dell'attività creatrice di Dio⁴⁷), è soltanto la dimora, il ricettacolo prezioso della misteriosa ed insondabile essenza divina, essendo incompatibile con la struttura religiosa del pensiero ahl-i haqq la nozione di una „teogonia evolutiva” implicante l'esistenza di un elemento anteriore alla suprema entità divina e generatore di questa.

All'interno della Perla il Dio sommo crea gli angeli secondo un processo evocativo che spesso appella ad una concezione emanatistica piuttosto che propriamente creazionistica. Tale modalità e significato dell'attività divina sono particolarmente sottolineati nel trattato persiano *Tadkerat ol a'lâ* (pp. 6-8 Ms.) dove, dopo aver menzionate la creazione della Perla, l'autore procede ad una complessa speculazione sulle successive emanazioni, da parte di Dio, di „immagini della sua propria immagine” in numero sempre maggiore ma poi riassorbite nell'unità divina⁴⁸). A ciascuno di tali ritorni all'unica immagine di Dio anche la Perla scompare, mostrando dunque che la sua funzione si risolve nel costituire il ricettacolo delle successive manifestazioni divine. Ciò appare confermato dalla conclusione del brano citato: „Egli stabili di manifestarsi a tutte le creature e creò dalla sua pura luce una Perla in forma di lampada”⁴⁹). Si noterà subito l'analogia con l'affermazione iniziale del *Libro nero*, che presenta la Perla come creata dal „prezioso seno” di Dio, sebbene il trattato ahl-i haqq mostri tendenze fortemente speculative (mistica della luce, concetto dell'„immagine” come mezzo di manifestazione di Dio, insondabilità della natura divina), che esulano dall'ambito della religiosità e delle dottrine yezidiche. Più vicina a queste ultime è la nozione ahl-i haqq della formazione degli

47) Nel „Libro del Polo” (*Qotbnamé*), poema ahl-i haqq in lingua turca di cui dà notizia il Minorsky, la nozione della Perla quale prima manifestazione della somma divinità è espressa nei seguenti termini: „Dio, essere antico e imperituro, era il segreto avvolto nel segreto. Questo Sovrano inimitabile si esteriorizzò in una Perla” (*Notes sur la secte des Ahlé-Haqq* in „Revue du Monde Musulman”, XL, 1920, p. 24 sg.).

48) Mokri, *La naissance du monde*, p. 162; cfr. Id., *Cinquante-deux versets*, p. 405 sg., *Le symbole de la Perle*, p. 477 sg., *L'ésotérisme kurde*, p. 14 e p. 18.

49) Mokri, *La naissance du monde*, p. 163. La medesima immagine della Perla come lampada luminosa, segno e manifestazione dello splendore divino, ricorre nel Trattato di polemica Béhai-Ahlé-Haqq pubblicato dal Minorsky (*Notes sur la secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, II in „Revue du Monde Musulman”, XLIV-XLV, 1921, p. 292, 11).

angeli all'interno della Perla quale risulta da altri testi, in cui ad essa segue l'uscita di Dio dalla Perla medesima e l'inizio della creazione del mondo visibile ⁵⁰). Si ha infatti una situazione originaria fondamentalmente analoga a quella descritta nel *Libro nero*: creazione degli angeli durante la dimora di Dio sopra la Perla primordiale (ovvero dentro di essa, come sembrerebbe risultare da qualche indizio) e allontanamento da questa come preludio al compimento della creazione.

Sebbene presso i Fedeli di Verità il tema della Perla sia utilizzato prevalentemente per esprimere l'idea di un livello spirituale, trascendente, nel quale l'essenza divina, prima conchiusa nella sua unità e segretezza, infine si manifesta e si dispiega realizzando la creazione degli angeli ⁵¹), tuttavia esso non è del tutto privo di quella rilevanza cosmogonica che abbiamo trovato primaria presso gli Yezidi ⁵²). Così,

⁵⁰) Raccolta dei poemi dello Sheikh Amīr (Ms., p. 42) in Mokri, *La naissance du monde*, p. 160 (cfr. Id., *Cinquante-deux versets*, p. 405; *Le symbole de la Perle*, p. 477; *L'ésotérisme kurde*, p. 14): „... quando il mio Re si trovava nella dimora della Perla, la Perla era nel seno dell'oceano invisibile del Segreto. Egli non volle restare solo. Egli testimoniò della sua capacità e fece apparire i suoi servitori fedeli. Egli concluse un patto con i suoi servitori, poi, mettendo avanti il piede sinistro, uscì dalla Perla". Il trattato di *‘Ālam-e Haqīqat* (in Mokri, *La naissance du monde*, p. 161; *Le symbole de la Perle*, p. 477 sg.; *L'ésotérisme kurde*, p. 15), dopo aver presentato Dio dimorante nella Perla, dichiara: „Poi la volontà divina dichiaro (o „decise”) la creazione del mondo-come dice il *Daftar*: ‘Egli aprì la Perla e uscì’. La formazione dei quattro angeli nella Perla è narrata anche nel componimento in versi dello Sheikh Amīr (Mokri, *Cinquante-deux versets*, p. 394, 3).

⁵¹) Cfr. anche il trattato dal titolo „L'Assemblée al riguardo della Pietra nera” (*Dawra-y-Wazāwar*) dove un personaggio a nome Aḥmad, incarnazione dell'angelo *Yādēgār*, ricorda la sua dimora nella Perla (vv. 17-19 in Mokri, *Le „Secret indicible” et la „Pierre noire” en Perse, dans la tradition des Kurdes et des Lurs Fidèles de Vérité (Ahl-e Haqq)* in „J.A.”, CCL, 1962, p. 401 sg.). L'idea che Dio esca dalla Perla per procedere alla creazione del mondo è presente nel „Libro del compimento” (in Minorsky, *art. cit.*, I, p. 25: „[Il Re del mondo] apparve per mostrarsi in sette manifestazioni e poi, avendo disteso il cielo verde, rientrare nella Perla”) e in un'altra tradizione ahl-i haqq riferita dal Minorsky (*art. cit.*, II, p. 268: „Il mio Re è uscito dalla Perla dicendo: ‘Che il mio segreto si esteriorizzi, e che io crei la terra e il cielo affinché un mondo meraviglioso venga all'esistenza’”). Il medesimo autore ha raccolto una versione del mito cosmogonico secondo la quale il mondo appare in seguito ad una esclamazione di Dio e dei primi quattro angeli residenti all'interno di una „bolla d'acqua”, la quale assolve la stessa funzione della Perla, in quanto ricettacolo degli esseri spirituali (*ibid.*, I, p. 25 sg.). In questo caso la manifestazione del mondo avviene durante la dimora del Creatore e degli angeli nell'involucro originario, secondo una concezione analoga a quella che ci è sembrato di poter individuare come soggiacente al mito yezidico enunciato nei capp. I-II del *Libro nero*.

⁵²) Presso questi ultimi, conformemente allo scarso rilievo speculativo delle

se in un primo testo appare, in termini alquanto allusivi ed oscuri, la descrizione del processo creativo a partire da una goccia della divina sostanza deposta nella „gemma”⁵³), la funzione cosmogonica della Perla è chiaramente affermata nel trattato in versi dello Sheikh Amir. Dopo la manifestazione dei quattro personaggi angelici con i quali Dio stipula il Patto, avviene che „essa (la Perla) si modellò sul cielo. La Perla si trasformò in firmamento e si modellò sul cielo”⁵⁴).

L'immagine della perla ricorre nella letteratura irano-islamica con una varietà e ricchezza di significati che vanno dalla equivalenza perla-embrione, conchiglia-matrice (da cui l'altra figlio e madre come perla e conchiglia) all'uso dell'espressione „perla intatta” per indicare la condizione di verginità; nel linguaggio letterario quest'immagine può essere utilizzata per definire un pensiero o una locuzione raffinata mentre, essendo la perla il tipico ornamento regale, essa vale ad esprimere il senso della preziosità di cose o persone⁵⁵). E' poi noto il profondo significato mistico che viene attribuito al simbolismo della perla da parte di vari autori islamici, equivalendo essa a sostanza o essenza divina ovvero alla più intima sostanza dell'uomo capace di attingere alla conoscenza del divino⁵⁶). Questo significato mostra qualche ana-

dottrine religiose, al contrario, la nozione della Perla come ricettacolo degli esseri divini è soltanto implicita e comunque il pensiero si esprime in forme alquanto vivaci e folkloriche.

53) Trattato persiano del derviscio Golshîr Sabzavârî in Mokri, *La naissance du monde*, p. 160 (cfr. Id., *Cinquante-deux versets*, p. 406; *Le symbole de la Perle*, p. 477; *L'ésotérisme kurde*, p. 14 sg.). Alle origini, quando nulla esisteva fuorchè Dio quale gemma in una conchiglia, „egli poi, per mezzo della sua potenza gettò una goccia della sua sostanza nella gemma ed essa si depose nel seno della gemma. Allora Dio tuonò e ciò divenne acqua. I cieli furono formati dal suo vapore e la Terra dalla sua schiuma”. In questo testo all'identificazione di Dio con la „gemma”, si accompagna l'idea dell'azione di Lui sulla medesima „gemma”, intesa quale germe primordiale, esprimendosi in tal modo la trascendenza del Creatore.

54) Mokri, *Cinquante-deux versets*, p. 395, 8.

55) Per un'analisi di questi molteplici significati cfr. Mokri, *Le symbole de la Perle*, pp. 463-481. Sulla simbologia della perla, la cui diffusione naturalmente esula dai limiti dell'area culturale qui in questione, e che si carica di valori diversi in relazione ai singoli contesti, cfr. Eliade, *Traité*, p. 454 sgg. con relativa bibliografia. Si può ricordare il più antico lavoro di H. Usener, *Die Perle. Aus der Geschichte eines Bildes* in „Theologische Abhandlungen Carl von Weizsäcker zu seinem siebenzigsten Geburtstage. 11. December 1892 gewidmet”, Freiburg i. Br. 1892, pp. 203-213.

56) Mokri, *Le symbole de la Perle*, p. 468 sg.; Bausani, *Persia religiosa*, p. 316 sgg.

logia con la nozione gnostica della sostanza pneumatica che, essenza preziosa, risiede nell'intimo dell'uomo, nozione parimenti espressa talora attraverso l'immagine della perla ⁵⁷). Comunque ora interessa sottolineare che, se l'uso dell'immagine della perla da parte degli Yezidi e degli Ahl-i Haqq ben si comprende nel contesto della precisa situazione storico-culturale di entrambe le comunità, a diverso titolo partecipanti di una tradizione islamica cui quella immagine era familiare e appellanti al mondo iranico che parimenti, al livello folklorico, ha sviluppato ampiamente il simbolismo della perla, un dato del tutto nuovo e specifico rispetto alla tradizione antico-iranica e irano-islamica è costituito proprio dal significato cosmogonico che la Perla riveste nei miti di creazione yezidici e, in misura minore, ahl-i haqq.

Secondo il Müller in seno all'Islam sussisterebbe qualche traccia della rilevanza cosmogonica della Perla nella rappresentazione della Tavola del destino celeste come una perla che si estende ad occupare quasi tutto lo spazio fra cielo e terra, fra est ed ovest ⁵⁸). In una *hadit* a *Corano* XLVII, 6 sg. si dice che il Profeta, nel suo viaggio in cielo, avrebbe visto „una cupola di bianca perla” da cui scaturiscono i quattro fiumi paradisiaci ⁵⁹). Il Müller ritiene che „diese Vorstellung auf eine ältere Welt-

57) Per una breve esemplificazione dei contesti gnostici che si richiamano all'immagine della perla per esprimere l'idea della sostanza divina dell'uomo cfr. Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 375 sg. dove si menziona, tra l'altro, anche il ben noto Inno della Perla degli *Atti di Tommaso*, capp. 108-113 (M. Bonnet, *Acta Apostolorum Apokrypha*, vol. II, 2, Lipsia 1903, pp. 219-224; G. Bornkamm, *Thomasakten* in E. Hennecke-W. Schneemelcher, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen* ³, vol. II, Tübingen 1964, pp. 349-353). Si può aggiungere che l'insistenza con cui tale immagine ricorre nella letteratura mandea, dove la preziosa essenza divina imprigionata del mondo e nel corpo umano è spesso definita „perla”, è un segno della appartenenza della gnosi mandea ad un ambiente culturale fortemente tinto di iranismo. Fra i vari luoghi mandei ricorderemo *G.D.* V, I [145] (Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, p. 159, 6, sg.); XII, IV [276] (*ibid.* p. 274, 12 sg.: „Die reine Perle kam, die die finsternen Herzen erleuchtete”); XV, XVI [347] (*ibid.*, p. 362, 19 sg. e 33 sg.; cfr. *ibid.*, p. 363, 4 sg.); *G.S.*, III, V [80] (*ibid.*, p. 514, 16 sg.); III, VI [81] (*ibid.*, p. 515, 24 sg.); III, VIII [82] (*ibid.*, p. 517, 6 sg.); III, LVIII [133] (*ibid.*, p. 590, 21 sg.). Il *Libro di Giovanni* menziona il „mistero della Perla” (42 [167] in Lidzbarski, *Das Johannesbuch*, p. 168, 12) e un personaggio del mondo divino, *Niṭuftā*, con l'attributo di „pura Perla” (68 [252] *ibid.*, p. 228, 18; 69 [256] *ibid.*, p. 231, 23 sg.). Cfr. Rudolph, *Theogonie*, pp. 39-42.

58) *Op. cit.*, p. 376; cfr. M. Horten, *Die religiöse Gedenkenwelt des Volkes im heutigen Islam*, 1-2 Lieferungen, Halle 1917-18, p. 73. Secondo un'altra concezione, Dio avrebbe creato la Tavola del destino „da una bianca Perla”; cfr. Horten, *loc. cit.*, dove si rimanda a Wolff, *Muhammedanische Eschatologie* 49, 10.

59) Horten, *op. cit.*, p. 374 con rinvio a Wolff, *op. cit.*, 107, 6.

eikonzeption anspielt, nach welcher das Himmelsgewölbe aus der oberen Schalenhälfte des zerborstenen Welteis erschaffen wurde, wie wir das ja auch für die Jesiden vermutet haben" 60).

L'accostamento proposto, tuttavia, ci sembra alquanto forzato. Parimenti inadeguato è il rinvio ad un luogo coranico (*Sura XXI*, 30) dove è assente ogni riferimento alla perla o all'uovo bensì si allude alla originaria unione di cielo e terra, alla loro divisione da parte di Dio che poi crea tutti i viventi 61). Infatti tale affermazione è perfettamente integrabile nel contesto del pensiero coranico relativo alla creazione, mentre d'altra parte non c'è motivo di ammettere che una „più antica concezione dell'uovo cosmico," il quale aprendosi dà luogo al mondo, soggiaccia ad ogni narrazione cosmogonica che presenti l'idea della separazione di elementi prima commisti.

Più interessanti sono due testi, rispettivamente del poeta persiano e teosofo Rûmî (m. 1273) e del poeta e santo Bâbâ Kûhî di Shîrâz (m. 1050), nei quali appare l'immagine dell'uovo cosmico. Nel primo, un'„Ode" (*ghazal*) del *Dîvân* („Canzoniere") 62), si afferma: „Questo mondo (*zamân*, „tempo") e l'altro sono come l'uovo e il pulcino che v'è dentro (in potenza), oscuro e mutilo, miserabile e reietto. (E anche) il *kufîr* (miscredenza) e la Fede considerali come il bianco e il giallo dell'uovo e fra loro, (muraglia) che unisce e separa, l'insuperabile *barzakh* (*Corano*, XXV, 53). Quand'Egli ha covato sotto l'ali sue, misericorde, quell'uovo, ateismo e religione sono annientati e l'uccello — Unità ne esce battendo (lieto) le ali!"

E' stato notato che l'immagine „di Dio che cova l'uovo dei due mondi ha un sapore così singolarmente non-islamico che non si può fare a meno dal pensare al ciclo di mitologemi più vicino, quello indiano", sebbene sia difficile addurre concrete prove di contatti storici che spieghino la presenza di tale immagine presso il poeta islamico 63).

Nel secondo testo, il poeta esclama: „Il tuo amore è come un gallo

60) *Op. cit.*, p. 376.

61) „Non vedono dunque gli empi che i cieli e la terra erano un tempo una massa confusa e noi li abbiām separati, e dall'acqua abbiām fatto germinare ogni cosa vivente?" (tr. di A. Bausani, *Il Corano*, Firenze 1961).

62) Ed. R. A. Nicholson, *Selected Poems from the Dîvānī Shamsī Tabriz*, Cambridge 1898 (ristampa 1952), nota a p. 221; cfr. Bausani, *Persia religiosa*, p. 342.

63) Bausani, *Persia religiosa*, p. 342. Il santo-poeta Bâbâ Kûhî, cui la tradizione attribuisce numerosi viaggi in terre lontane, „potrebbe aver conosciuto in India" il motivo dell'uovo cosmico (Bausani, *loc. cit.*). Tuttavia l'immagine dell'uovo „cosmologico" risulta attestata nella tradizione iranica pre-islamica (vedi oltre).

bianco nei due mondi, e il cielo divenne come un (grande) uovo il cui giallo è il sole" 64).

Noteremo peraltro che presso entrambi gli autori islamici citati l'immagine dell'uovo è addotta quale termine di comparazione rispettivamente della sovranità di Dio sui due mondi, attuale e futuro, e dell'aspetto del cielo, in cui il sole appare come il tuorlo entro l'uovo. Pertanto l'ode di Rûmî esprime una nozione affine a quella ahl-i haqq secondo cui Dio fa ruotare nella sua mano i due mondi come un uovo, ma non contiene alcun riferimento propriamente cosmogonico 65). D'altra parte, nel passo di Bâbâ Kûhî la menzione dell'uovo è in chiara funzione cosmologica, come nei testi iranici sui quali più oltre verremo, descrivendosi con essa la struttura del mondo attuale.

Un terzo testo, tratto ancora dal *Divân* di Rûmî, esprime una concezione che risulta, tra tutte, la più vicina alle dottrine yezidiche ed ahl-i haqq; in esso appare infatti la menzione di una „sostanza” ovvero della „perla”, essendo *gouhar* un termine che abbraccia entrambi i significati 66), la quale „bolli, come un uovo, e divenne mare, il mare

64) Bausani, *loc. cit.*, dove si rimanda ad un articolo di E. E. Berthels, *Kosmiceskie mify v gazeli baba Kûhî* in „Dokl. Ross. Ak. Nauk”, 1925 B, p. 43 sgg., il quale aveva già sottolineato l'importanza della dottrina qui enunciata.

65) In essa interviene inoltre la metafora del „covare” che, presso gli Yezidi assume un senso del tutto realistico (Dio che si pone sulla Perla!). A questo proposito appare pertinente una osservazione del Mokri relativa alla tendenza degli Ahl-i Haqq ad attribuire ad alcune immagini metaforiche correnti nel mondo irano-islamico un senso compiutamente reale e concreto. Così, ad esempio, l'aquila reale, esprimente la nozione della potenza divina, diventa presso i Fedeli di Verità una incarnazione di Dio (*Le Chasseur de Dieu*, p. 42 sg.) e l'immagine di 'Alî come „leone di Dio”, corrente nel linguaggio musulmano, nei racconti ahl-i haqq è espressione della natura del personaggio, presentato in figura di leone (Mokri, *Le „Secret indicible” et la „Pierre noire” en Perse*, p. 375, p. 385 sg.; cfr. Id., *L'idée de l'incarnation chez les Ahl-i Haqq* in „Akten des Vierundzwanzigsten Internationalen Orientalisten-Kongresses München”, Wiesbaden 1959, p. 497). L'autore conclude che è tipico degli Ahl-i Haqq „il passaggio dal senso figurato al senso proprio” (*loc. cit.*). Anche gli Yezidi manifesterebbero, almeno a proposito della rappresentazione di Dio in figura di uccello e del suo „covare”, una medesima tendenza.

66) Sul duplice significato dell'iranico *gohr* („perla”, „gioiello” e „sostanza”, „essenza”) cfr. S. Wikander in „Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift”, 1941, p. 228 sg. (rec. C.-M. Edsman, *Le baptême de feu*, Uppsala 1940), cit. in J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *La religion de l'Iran ancien*, Paris 1962, p. 271. Si veda anche Bausani, *Persia religiosa*, p. 343. Sul carattere iranico del simbolo della perla cfr. anche G. Widengren, *Der iranische Hintergrund der Gnosis* in „Z.R.G.G.”, IV, 2 (1952), p. 113.

schiumò e la schiuma divenne terra e dal fumo suo sorse il cielo" 67).

Se in questo luogo la parola *gouhar* fosse da intendere nel senso proprio di „perla" avremmo senz'altro l'affermazione del valore cosmogonico di quest'ultima e pertanto un interessante parallelo alle narrazioni sulla Perla primordiale quali sono note agli Yezidi e agli Ahl-i Haqq. Comunque, secondo le concordi affermazioni del Berthels e del Bausani, l'immagine dell'uovo cosmico, ovvero quella in parte equivalente della perla con funzione cosmogonica 68), quale appare presso gli autori citati, sarebbe di natura chiaramente estranea all'Islam. La sua presenza in ambiente yezidico ed ahl-i haqq, pertanto, non può essere intesa come apporto specificamente islamico, nonostante che tale immagine ricorra, in via eccezionale e con le caratteristiche esaminate, nei pochi luoghi sopra addotti.

Nel mondo iranico, la tradizione mazdaica fondata sull'idea di un dio personale trascendente, autore della creazione, nei suoi livelli *mēnōk* e *gētīk*, conosce la nozione dell'uovo cosmologico, essendo utilizzata l'immagine dell'uovo per esprimere l'idea della sfericità del mondo 69). Così in *Zātspram* 34, 20 Ohrmazd afferma di avere stabilito la terra al centro del cielo „come il tuorlo di un uovo nel centro di un uovo" 70), con espressione che ritorna in altri luoghi, dove il complesso degli elementi cosmici, „il cielo, la terra, le acque e tutto ciò che vi è in essi", è rappresentato „in forma di uovo, proprio come l'uovo di un uccello" 71).

67) Nicholson, *op. cit.*, Appendice I, p. 335; cfr. Bausani, *Persia religiosa*, p. 343.

68) Il Berthels ritiene che nella dottrina sufica la „perla bianca" assolve la stessa funzione cosmogonica dell'Uovo nelle tradizioni indiane (cit. in Bausani, *Persia religiosa*, p. 343).

69) Tale idea è affermata, senza alcun appello alla figura dell'uovo, nel *Bundahišn* 18, 10 e nella *Rivāyat* pahlavica a *Dd.* 46, 4. Cfr. H. W. Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth-Century Books*, Oxford 1943 (ristampa 1971), p. 135.

70) Testo *apud* Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 136; cfr. R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan. A Zoroastrian Dilemma*, Oxford 1955, p. 344 e 349. Secondo il *Bundahišn* il cielo fu creato da Ohrmazd „nella forma di un uovo" (cap. I, 43; cfr. M. Molé, *La naissance du monde dans l'Iran préislamique* in *La naissance du monde*, p. 323).

71) *Dāstān īmenok īxrat*, 43, 8-11 *apud* Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 136; cfr. *The Sacred Books of the East*, ed. F. M. Müller, vol. XXIV, Oxford 1885, p. 84 sg. Simile nozione è espressa nella *Rivāyat* pahlavica al *Dāstān i Dēnik* 46, 5 (cfr. Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 136; Zaehner, *op. cit.*, p. 361 e p. 365. Si veda anche *Dāstān i Dēnik*, 90, *apud* Bailey, *loc. cit.* Su questi testi cfr. E. Benveniste, *The Persian Religion According to the Chief Greek Texts*, Paris 1929, pp. 100-102; U. Bianchi, *Zamān i Ohrmazd. Lo zoroastrismo nelle sue origini e nella sua essenza*, Torino 1958, pp. 207-210. Il Bailey nota che l'idea di esprimere la sfericità del cielo attraverso il paragone con l'uovo è attribuita in Grecia già ad Empedocle (*op. cit.*, p. 135). Cfr. H. Diels, *Doxographi graeci*, Berlino 1879, p. 363.

La nozione dell'uovo, pertanto, nelle dottrine mazdaiche è priva di qualsiasi riferimento cosmogonico; essa vale soltanto come termine di paragone della struttura attuale del mondo ⁷²⁾. Il significato cosmologico dell'immagine risulta egualmente dalla testimonianza di Plutarco relativa alle dottrine dualistiche iraniche. Ohrmazd, dopo aver creato ventiquattro dèi, li pose in un uovo ma Ahriman, formati altrettanti esseri demoniaci, li fece penetrare all'interno di esso procurando in tal modo la mescolanza di beni e di mali (*De Iside*, 47). In questa fonte, la cui relazione con i testi iranici sopra citati è stata riconosciuta da più parti ⁷³⁾, appare l'equivalenza uovo-mondo senza che peraltro intervenga altra concezione se non quella della forma sferica dell'universo creato da Ohrmazd, di cui si afferma la trascendenza e l'attività demiurgica.

Nei contesti culturali e religiosi più prossimi all'ambiente yezidico ed ahl-i haqq non è dunque possibile ritrovare tracce sicure della concezione dell'uovo cosmico che nell'uno e, sia pure con minore intensità, nell'altro, soggiace alla dottrina della Perla originaria. Possiamo aggiungere che in un testo ahl-i haqq — cui sopra si è accennato — appare l'immagine dei due mondi (l'invisible e il visible) che sono „come un uovo nella mano del Creatore” ⁷⁴⁾; il ricorrere, in funzione cosmologica, della simbologia dell'uovo presso i Fedeli di Verità potrebbe essere un indizio, tra gli altri numerosi, della forte componente iranica del loro patrimonio religioso ⁷⁵⁾, ma essa rimane distinta dalla tematica della Perla primordiale intesa come elemento cosmogonico. Quest'ultima, nella sua tipicità, rimane un dato caratterizzante il mito yezidico, per il quale l'unico parallelo pienamente adeguato è costituito dalla dottrina ahl-i haqq espressa nel poema in versi di Sheikh Amīr, secondo cui la Perla originaria, dimora di Dio e ricettacolo della prima creazione, si trasforma nella volta celeste.

Per spiegare la presenza in entrambe le sette, pur così diverse sotto molti profili, di un tema cosmogonico la cui arcaicità è

72) Cfr. Bianchi, *Zamān*, p. 208 sg.; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *La religion de l'Iran ancien*, Paris 1962, p. 210 n. 1; p. 315.

73) Benveniste, *op. cit.*, p. 100 sgg.; Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 135 n. 4; Bianchi, *Zamān*, p. 207 sg.

74) *Šāhnāma-ye Haqīqat* (Ms., p. 2) in Mokri, *Le naissance du monde*, p. 162; Id., *Cinquante-deux versets*, p. 408 sg.

75) Sugli elementi iranici nelle dottrine ahl-i haqq cfr. Mokri, *Le Chasseur de Dieu*, p. 23 sg.; Id., *L'ésotérisme kurde*, *passim*.

dimostrata da numerosi paralleli etnologici ⁷⁶), si affaccia legittima l'ipotesi di un comune impressito a quel sostrato di cultura e religiosità popolare curda su cui le tradizioni yezidiche ed ahl-i haqq senza dubbio si radicano ⁷⁷). Ciò giustificerebbe in pari tempo il carattere di eccezionalità che la nozione esaminata presenta in rapporto all'ambiente circostante e la sua pertinenza pressochè esclusiva ai due contesti religiosi in questione. Purtroppo questo sostrato curdo sfugge ad una precisa indagine storiografica, ma esso è con ogni verisimiglianza ipotizzabile proprio in un caso come il nostro. Quando si constata presso due complessi religiosi appartenenti ad un medesimo *ethnos* la presenza di una dottrina che per la sua specifica connotazione fenomenologica difficilmente potrebbe essere spiegata come il frutto di una indipendente „invenzione”, e che in pari tempo non trova riscontro nell'ambito delle culture circostanti ovvero in quelle tradizioni che a diverso titolo abbiano influenzato i complessi religiosi in questione, è legittimo rimandare al patrimonio tradizionale di quell'*ethnos* medesimo come fonte ultima della dottrina esaminata. Si può pensare allora che in ambiente popolare curdo circolasse il tema mitico dell'uovo cosmico, che risulta radicato e diffuso nella tradizione religiosa dell'India dall'età dei *Brāhmaṇa* fino alla più recente tradizioni dei poemi epici e dei *Purāṇa* ⁷⁸). Questo tema appare però elaborato in funzione di una impostazione creazionistica di tipo coranico, la quale conosce la figura di un Dio personale trascendente. Ne risulta una formulazione religiosa per qualche verso originale, in cui il tema mitico dell'uovo cosmico, divenuto qui la bianca Perla, tende a comporsi con la nozione della

76) Cfr. n. 37 e *Appendice*.

77) L'eventualità che lo yezidismo, sorto nel contesto della *shī'a* ommiade, una volta concentratosi in una zona marginale quale è il Kurdistan, abbia ivi assunto la sua fisionomia religiosa, accogliendo tra l'altro „credenze locali di religione popolare curda”, è avanzata dal Bausani (*Religioni nuove sorte dall'Islam*, p. 248). Lo studioso ritiene che l'esistenza di tale sostrato religioso curdo possa essere comprovata proprio dalle affinità notevoli che, sotto alcuni profili, si riscontrano fra „Curdi ultra-ommiadi come gli Yazidi e Curdi ultra-alidi come gli *Ahl-i haqq*” (*loc. cit.*).

78) Con questo riferimento alla tradizione indiana non intendiamo aderire all'ipotesi diffusionistica che farebbe dell'India il centro di irradiazione di tale tematica. Basti solo sottolineare la sicura presenza di essa in un ambiente culturale geograficamente vicino al nostro e in un arco di tempo molto ampio. Ciò rende probabile l'eventualità che, a livello di sostrato religioso curdo, fosse presente il motivo cosmogonico dell'uovo primordiale che appare presso gli Yezidi e gli Ahl-i Haqq.

trascendenza di Dio e della sua autonoma azione creatrice, alla quale la Perla-uovo cosmogonico offre la materia di base per la formazione di alcuni elementi cosmici.

La complessità della formula cosmogonica yezidica, che accoglie due concezioni fondamentalmente antitetiche, quali l'idea biblico-coranica della trascendenza e creatività divina e il tema mitico dell'uovo cosmico esprimente una nozione monistico-evolutiva del *fieri* del mondo, risulta sottolineata dall'affermazione del *Libro Nero* secondo cui la Perla ha avuto origine dal „prezioso seno” o „dalla preziosa essenza” di Dio stesso. L'attribuzione della tipica funzione cosmogonica dell'uovo originario alla bianca Perla appare il segno del contesto culturale e religioso irano-islamico in cui si colloca lo yezidismo; la nozione della Perla-essenza divina, da parte sua, rimanda a quelle correnti sofiche e gnostizzanti che nel mondo irano-islamico sono ampiamente rappresentate ⁷⁹⁾. Di fatto, il più significativo parallelo alla dottrina yezidica in esame si è rivelato il testo del poeta e mistico sufi Rûmî, in cui ricorre il termine *gouhar* che, nel suo ambivalente significato di „essenza” o „perla”, esprime con efficacia quel rapporto fra l'immagine mitica della perla e il concetto di sostanza preziosa (divina) che sussiste, sia pure in forme colorite e folkloriche, nello stesso pensiero yezidico.

D'altra parte, la concezione di una Perla originaria emanata dalla divinità come manifestazione dell'essenza divina, quale si esprime in una breve formula mitica presso gli Yezidi e con ricchezza di sviluppi speculativi presso i Fedeli di Verità, presenta una notevole affinità tipologica con le formulazioni gnostiche, parimenti fondate sull'idea di un processo emanativo della sostanza divina a partire da una entità somma e utilizzanti l'immagine della perla per esprimere la consustanzialità fra il Dio sommo e le sue emanazioni. Fra tutte ⁸⁰⁾, la gnosi mandea è quella che con maggiore frequenza ricorre all'immagine della perla per indicare il processo emanativo della sostanza divina ⁸¹⁾ e che in pari tempo conosce la nozione dell'*hîlbuna* („uovo”) come ricettacolo degli esseri del mondo spirituale e insieme come principio teogonico ⁸²⁾. L'ipotesi che la dottrina cosmogonica yezidica abbia subito influssi

79) Cfr. Bausani, *Persia religiosa*, pp. 251-286.

80) Oltre i luoghi citati sopra (p. 216, n. 57), per la perla-essenza divina nel manicheismo cfr. Usener, *art. cit.*, p. 211 n. 1; H. Jonas, *Gnosis und Spätantiker Geist*, vol. I, *Die hythologische Gnosis*, Göttingen 1964, p. 104 n. 2.

81) Cfr. sopra p. 216, n. 57.

82) Cfr. Rudolph, *Die Religion der Mandäer*, p. 418.

gnostici, e più precisamente mandei, in relazione al concetto della Perla emanata dalla sostanza stessa di Dio e ricettacolo di quest'ultimo insieme con i suoi angeli⁸³), non è illegittima, sebbene sia necessario riconoscere il forte condizionamento folklorico che tale influsso ha indubbiamente subito⁸⁴). Più difficile è peraltro stabilire se le eventuali influenze gnostiche sullo yezidismo siano dirette ovvero mediate attraverso quelle correnti mistiche islamiche che, come il sufismo⁸⁵), hanno recepito in larga misura dottrine gnostiche⁸⁶).

Una variante molto significativa del tema mitico esaminato è offerta da una versione del racconto yezidico delle origini riferita da un autore arabo⁸⁷). In essa si narra che in principio esisteva soltanto Dio, creatore di tutto, il quale „passeggiava sul mare, che si trovava nello spazio nebbioso”⁸⁸). Egli poi „creò un pappagallo e dominò su di lui per quaranta anni. Poi si adirò e lo uccise e creò dal suo piumaggio le montagne e le valli, dal suo respiro l'atmosfera, dal suo vapore il cielo”.

Se si compara questo racconto con la seconda versione del mito di creazione nel *Libro nero*⁸⁹), si noteranno una serie notevole di parallelismi: il motivo delle acque originarie sulle quali si muove Dio, l'ira di Lui e la creazione della terra e del cielo⁹⁰) in conseguenza della

83) Si veda il testo siriano di Ramicho' dove la Perla compie una funzione „teogonica”, dando luogo con la sua apertura a „trecento dèi” (*infra*, p. o).

84) Il problema dei rapporti tra yezidismo e mandeismo si pone anche in relazione alla figura di Melek Tâ'ûs, come è stato sottolineato dal Furlani (*Il Pavone e gli ʿUthrê ribelli presso i Mandeî e il Pavone dei Yezidi* in „S.M.S.R.”, XXI, 1947-48, pp. 58-76).

85) I rapporti degli Yezidi, alle origini e nei successivi sviluppi del movimento, con l'ambiente suffico sono posti in luce dal Bois, *art. cit.*, pp. 194-201.

86) Cfr. Bausani, *Persia religiosa*, p. 255 (per il sufismo) e *passim*.

87) Th. Menzel, *Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Jeziden. Die Teufelsanbeter oder Ein Blick auf die widerspenstige Sekte der Jeziden. Ein türkischer Text über die Jeziden von Mustafa Nûrî Pascha dem Kreter* in H. Grothe, *Meine Vorderasien-Expedition 1906 und 1907*, Leipzig 1911, vol. I, p. CXXXIV. Cfr. Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 157 sg.

88) Ritorna il tema delle acque originarie che, presente nel *Libro nero*, appare un dato costante della cosmogonia yezidica. Sulla diffusione di questo tema, caratteristico della mitologia indiana, cfr. Numazawa, *op. cit.*, pp. 304-308.

89) Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 89 sg., 28-30.

90) Nel *Libro nero* si afferma che „Dio salì in cielo, lo indurì e lo rese stabile senza colonne” (Furlani, *op. cit.*, p. 90, 30; cfr. Joseph, *art. cit.*, p. 224). La nozione del cielo fissato da Dio al di sopra della terra senza bisogno di sostegni ricorre parimenti nella versione cosmogonica attestata da Mustafa Nûrî Pascià (*loc. cit.*). Essa trova un parallelo nell'affermazione di numerosi testi pahlavici (cfr. ad

spartizione di un elemento originario. Tale elemento, che nel *Libro nero* e nel testo siriano pubblicato dal Nau è la Perla, nella versione mitica riferita da Mustafa Nûrî Pascià è un uccello, dal cui corpo derivano le componenti cosmiche fondamentali (le montagne e le valli, l'atmosfera e il cielo) e che pertanto assolve la medesima funzione cosmogonica della Perla primordiale ⁹¹). Questa variante sembra essere il frutto di una contaminazione fra le due versioni offerte dal *Libro nero*, di cui la prima menzionava l'uccello Anfar sul quale fu deposta la perla, mentre la seconda presentava soltanto quest'ultima. La narrazione ora esaminata attesta dunque una tradizione in cui la funzione di strumento cosmogonico è stata trasferita dalla perla all'animale. Noteremo d'altra parte che il tema mitico di un essere vivente primordiale ucciso, dal cui corpo ha origine il mondo, appella ad una tipologia specifica, quella del „dio cosmico” o del „macrantropo”, tipologia complessa e articolata che peraltro sarebbe forse eccessivo chiamare in causa per un diretto confronto con il mito yezidico, in cui di essa rimane, se mai, un'eco molto lontana. Comunque risulta confermato il carattere composito delle tradizioni cosmogoniche della setta e la presenza in esse di mitologemi di notevole arcaicità.

APPENDICE

Come è noto, la tematica dell'uovo cosmogonico trova uno sviluppo del tutto particolare nell'ambito delle dottrine religiose dell'India, dove il motivo dell'uovo cosmico appare, fin dai *Brāhmaṇa*, come una delle forme privilegiate di espressione del pensiero cosmogonico. Esso, di solito connesso con il tema tipicamente indiano del mare primordiale, è utilizzato nel duplice senso di involucro contenente un essere divino che in vario modo opera la creazione e di elemento originario dalla cui spartizione derivano le componenti del cosmo. Nel primo di questi significati l'immagine dell'uovo cosmico trova un precedente nella nozione vedica del „germe d'oro” (*Hiranyagarbha*) accolto nelle acque primordiali e identificato a Prajāpati, da cui hanno origine tutti gli dèi ⁹²). Essa è ampiamente sviluppata nella

esempio *Dēnkart*, 8, 2 sg. *apud* Molé, *art. cit.*, p. 307; *Zātspram* 34, 20 *apud* Zaehner, *op. cit.*, p. 349) secondo cui il cielo sovrasta la terra per virtù di Ohrmazd, senza aver bisogno di alcun sostegno (cfr. Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 123 sg.; Bianchi, *Zamān*, p. 210 n. 49).

⁹¹) La concordanza fra le due narrazioni appare anche nel particolare della dimora di Dio sulla Perla e, rispettivamente, sul pappagallo, per quaranta anni.

⁹²) *Rigveda* X, 121 in K. F. Geldner, *Der Rig-Veda*, vol. III, Cambridge 1951, p. 347 sgg. Cfr. U. Bianchi, *Teogonie e cosmogonie*, Roma 1960, p. 62 sg., p. 67 sg.; J. Gonda, *Le religioni dell'India in Storia delle religioni* a cura di G. Castellani, vol. V, Torino 1971, p. 312 sg. La nozione del germe aureo è nota anche nell'*Atharvaveda* X, 7, cfr. *ib.*, X, 8 (Bianchi, *op. cit.*, p. 72 sg.). Sulle dottrine cosmogoniche indiane cfr. A.-M. Esnoul, *La naissance du monde dans l'Inde* in *La naissance du monde*, pp. 329-365. Sulla nozione vedica del „germe aureo”, *ib.*, p. 334.

Sātapatha Brāhmaṇa (XI, 1, 6, 1 sgg.) dove si narra come le acque originarie, in virtù dello sforzo interiore e del calore prodotto dall'ascesi, formano un „uovo d'oro”; da esso, dopo un anno, nasce Prajāpati che spezza il guscio dell'uovo e, pronunciando alcune parole, forma la terra, il firmamento e il cielo⁹³).

Analoga è la narrazione cosmogonica del *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (1, 2, 45 sgg.) dove egualmente l'uovo cosmico, formato dalla massa compatta degli elementi e posto sulle acque, è la dimora del „creatore”, qui detto Brahmā⁹⁴). Nella *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* III, 19 appare invece la nozione della completa trasformazione dell'uovo, prodotto dal passaggio del „non esistente” all'„esistente”, nei diversi elementi che costituiscono il mondo senza che vi sia in esso un essere divino con connotazione personale, agente della creazione⁹⁵).

I due temi (nascita di un personaggio divino con funzioni demiurgiche all'interno dell'uovo e trasformazione di quest'ultimo in elementi cosmici) sono entrambi presenti nella cosmogonia elaborata nelle *Leggi di Manu* I, 5 sgg. dove l'„Esistente in sé” (*Svayambhū*) disperdendo le tenebre originarie, „creò le acque e pose su di esse la sua dimora. Questa (dimora) diventò un uovo d'oro, pari in splendore al sole; in questo (uovo) egli stesso fu generato come Brahmā, il progenitore di tutto il mondo”. Dopo un anno Brahmā, col suo pensiero, divise l'uovo in due metà, dalle quali formò cielo e terra, dando poi origine a tutto il resto della creazione⁹⁶).

Una eguale fusione dei due temi si ha in un luogo di *Harivaṃśa* (35 sgg.) che, come le *Leggi di Manu*, attribuisce funzione cosmogonica alle due parti dell'uovo, trasformate rispettivamente nel cielo e nella terra, ma in pari tempo conosce l'azione demiurgica di un essere con tratti personalistici, Brahmā, che, nato

93) Muir, J., *Original Sanskrit Texts on the Origin and History of the People of India*, London 1874 (rist. Amsterdam 1967), vol. IV, p. 24 sgg.; cfr. H. Jacoby, *Cosmogony and Cosmology (Indian)* in Hastings, *Encyclopaedia*, vol. IV, p. 157; H. von Glasenapp, *Die Religionen Indiens*, Stuttgart 1956 (tr. it., Torino 1963), p. 87 sg.; A. Ballini, s.v. *Cosmogonia (Le cosmogonie indiane)* in *Enc. It.*, XI, p. 584; Esnoul, *art. cit.*, pp. 339-343. Si veda anche *Sātapatha Brāhmaṇa* VI, 1, 1, 10 in Muir, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 21 sg.

94) H. H. Wilson, *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, London 1864, vol. I; cfr. Jacoby, *art. cit.*, p. 159. Testo e traduzione anche in Muir, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 41 sg. La medesima dottrina è enunciata in *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, canto CI, 21-22 (in F. Eden Paragiter, *The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, Calcutta 1904, p. 552). Altri riferimenti all'uovo di Brahmā nella medesima opera: cfr. i canti LXXXVIII, 8 sg. (*ib.*, p. 459), XCII, 35 (*ib.*, p. 521), CII, 1 sg. (*ib.*, p. 553), CIII, 1 sgg. (*ib.*, p. 556). Cenni alla dottrina dell'uovo cosmico, da cui derivano le diverse entità divine, appaiono spesso nei poemi epici *Mahābhārata* e *Rāmāyaṇa* (cfr. E. Washburn Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, Strassburg 1915, p. 45, p. 77, p. 81, p. 148, p. 168, p. 174 sg., p. 190 sg.) sebbene le più antiche versioni della cosmogonia ivi enunciate sembrino ignorare l'origine di Brahmā dall'uovo (Washburn Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 189, p. 198).

95) Muir, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 26 sg. Cfr. Jacoby, *art. cit.*, p. 157; Esnoul, *art. cit.*, p. 345.

96) Muir, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 30 sg.; cfr. Jacoby, *art. cit.*, p. 158 sg.; Ballini, *art. cit.*, p. 584; Esnoul, *art. cit.*, pp. 346-349; Glasenapp, *op. cit.*, p. 140; A. Di Nola s.v. *Induismo* in *Enciclopedia delle religioni*, Firenze 1971, vol. III, col. 1081. La cosmogonia delle *Leggi di Manu* sarebbe fondata su *Rigveda* X, 129 e *Sātapatha Brāhmaṇa* ovvero su altre antiche fonti, con introduzione di più recenti dottrine (cfr. Muir, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 30).

dall'uovo medesimo, ne opera la divisione e, fra i due gusci di esso, attua la creazione⁹⁷). In altri passi dei *Purāṇa* la speculazione cosmogonica parimenti utilizza la tematica dell'uovo originario ma le attribuisce dei significati in parte nuovi rispetto a quelli già esaminati, dei quali peraltro sussiste il primo, relativo alla presenza, all'interno dell'uovo, di una entità (Brahmā, l'Anima universale, il Puruṣa) che mette in moto il processo creativo⁹⁸). L'uovo cosmico è considerato come quello che „racchiude tutti questi mondi, con tutto ciò che essi contengono, dotato di movimento o immobile⁹⁹). Per questa affermazione, la quale tuttavia nello stesso testo coesiste con l'idea del dispiegamento della creazione a partire dall'uovo originario¹⁰⁰), l'uovo medesimo assume, oltre la connotazione cosmogonica ancora presente, un riferimento cosmologico, quale immagine della struttura sferica dell'universo. Questo terzo significato del tema in esame emerge, non del tutto scevro da aspetti cosmogonici, nel *Linga Purāṇa* (I, 3, 28 sgg.)¹⁰¹ e nel *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (III, 26, 50 sgg.)¹⁰²), mentre in funzione puramente cosmologica è evocata l'immagine dell'uovo nello *Yogabhāṣya* III, 26¹⁰³) e in *Sūrya Siddhānta* XII, 29 sgg.¹⁰⁴).

In tutti i contesti indiani citati la nozione dell'uovo originario con funzione cosmogonica esprime una visione di tipo evolutivo-„immanentistico”, per la quale il fieri del mondo si svolge secondo un processo che, partendo da *archai* primordiali indifferenziate, perviene al dispiegamento degli elementi cosmici e in pari tempo alla manifestazione degli esseri divini. Ciò risulta più nettamente là dove si afferma che il principio divino, Prajapāti o Brahmā, nasce all'interno dell'uovo cosmico il quale, aprendosi, con le sue parti dà luogo alla creazione. Tale concezione tuttavia è parimenti soggiacente alle formulazioni cosmogoniche che presentano Brahmā come anteriore all'uovo ovvero come produttore di esso, una volta che anche in queste formulazioni l'agente divino della creazione, il quale del resto ha scarsa connotazione personalistica, essendo piuttosto una *arché* producente nel suo dispiegarsi il divenire delle cose, si introduce, quale germe aureo, nell'uovo medesimo e solo dopo l'apertura di questo mette in moto il processo creativo.

In altri ambienti religiosi del Vicino Oriente e in Grecia è presente, con pari significato cosmogonico, la tematica dell'uovo primordiale. Senza considerare quei miti che narrano l'origine di singole divinità da un uovo, i quali rimandano ad una tipologia in parte diversa¹⁰⁵), basti ricordare la cosmogonia fenicia, nelle due

97) Muir, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 32.

98) *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* III, 20, 12-17 in Muir, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 43; cfr. *ib.*, II 5, 34 sg. e II, 10, 10 sg. (*ib.*, p. 44 sg.).

99) *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, canto XLV, 65 in F. Eden Pargiter, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

100) *Ib.* 65-67.

101) Muir, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 42 sg.

102) Muir, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 43 sg. In questo testo si dice che dai sette principi fusi in unità da un essere divino, sorse un „uovo inanimato” da cui emerse Puruṣa.

103) Cfr. Jacoby, *art. cit.*, p. 160: tutto l'universo è contenuto nell'uovo cosmico ed è costituito da sette regioni sovrapposte.

104) Jacoby, *loc. cit.*

105) Ad ambiente mesopotamico appartiene il mito di Oannes nato dall'uovo primigenio (Hellad. *apud* Fozio, *Bibl.*, 535 a, *P.G.* CIV, col. 321 C; cfr. O. Gruppe, *Die griechischen Culte und Mythen in ihren Beziehungen zu den orientalischen Religionen*, Leipzig 1887, I, p. 658 n. 54). In Siria si ha la narrazione relativa alla nascita da un uovo della dea Derceto-Atargatis (Nigidio Figulo,

versioni rispettivamente attribuite a Mochos¹⁰⁶) e a Sanchuniaton¹⁰⁷). Mentre la prima conosce il tema dell'uovo cosmico che con le sue metà forma le principali componenti del mondo (cielo e terra), nella seconda versione l'immagine dell'uovo è utilizzata per esprimere la totalità e completezza di un personaggio luminoso, Mot, che assolve esso stesso il ruolo di principio cosmogonico. La manifestazione del suo splendore, infatti, coincide con l'apparizione degli astri¹⁰⁸).

Entrambi i motivi (apertura del guscio dell'uovo con la conseguente formazione di Cielo e Terra e apparizione di un essere luminoso con funzioni demiurgiche) risultano presenti nelle Teogonie orfiche sulla cui origine e datazione le opinioni, come è noto, sono discordi¹⁰⁹). In questa sede interessa sottolineare l'insistenza,

Sphaera graecanica, ed. Swoboda, Vindobonae 1889, rist. Amsterdam 1964, n° 48a; Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 197, ed. H. J. Rose, Lugduni Batavorum, 1933². Cfr. P. L. Van Berg, *Corpus Cultus Deae Syriae*. I, *Les sources littéraires*. 1. *Répertoire des sources grecques et latines*, Leiden 1972, p. 37 sg.; 2. *Étude critique des sources mythographiques grecques et latines*, Leiden 1972, p. 92 sgg.). Secondo la notizia di Diodoro Siculo (*Bibl. hist.* I, 27, 5) Osiride sarebbe nato parimenti da un uovo. Cfr. Gruppe, *loc. cit.* La teologia ermopolitana ha utilizzato la tematica dell'uovo primordiale per rappresentare l'origine degli otto dèi maggiori ovvero del dio solare in forma di falco (cfr. S. Morenz, *Ägyptische Religion*, Stuttgart 1960, tr. it. Milano 1968, p. 242 sgg.; Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 377). Sulle diverse formulazioni della dottrina dell'uovo primordiale in Egitto cfr. S. Sauneron-J. Yoyotte, *La naissance du monde selon l'Égypte ancienne* in *La naissance du monde*, pp. 59-62. Infine, in Grecia si può menzionare il mito di Elena e dei Dioscuri (cfr. O. Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, vol. II, Berlin 1935, 2a ed. 1963, p. 151).

106) *Apud* Damascio, cap. 125, 3 (*Damascii successoris Dubitationes et Solutiones de primis Principiis in Platonis Parmenidem*, ed. C. Ae. Ruelle, Paris 1889, vol. I, p. 323).

107) *Apud* Eusebio, *Praep. evangelica* I, 10, 2. Cfr. O. Eissfeld, *Phönikische und griechische Kosmogonie* in „*Éléments orientaux dans la religion grecque ancienne*”, Colloque de Strasbourg 22-24 mai 1958, Paris 1960, pp. 1-15.

108) Sul valore delle testimonianze di Eusebio e di Damascio intorno alla cosmogonia fenicia cfr. A. Caquot, *La naissance du monde selon Canaan* in *La naissance du monde*, p. 182 sg. Al di là di ogni possibile riserva sulla autenticità „cananea” della cosmogonia descritta in queste fonti, il motivo dell'uovo cosmogonico „pourrait seul être conforme à ce que nous entrevoyons du schème cosmogonique cananéen” (*ib.*, p. 183).

109) Mentre il Gruppe pensa di poterle attribuire, sia pure con qualche riserva, al periodo fra il VI e il IV sec. av. Cr. (s.v. *Orpheus* in Roscher, *Lexikon*, vol. III, 1 col. 1148 sg.), lo Zeller (*Die Philosophie der Griechen und ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 5a ed., Leipzig 1892 sgg., tr. it. Firenze 1951, vol. I, p. 219 sgg.) rifiuta di considerarle più antiche del III sec. av. Cr. Cfr. J. F. Burns, *Cosmogony and Cosmology (Greek)* in Hastings, *Encyclopaedia*, vol. IV, p. 147 sg. Su tutto il problema si veda W. K. C. Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, London 1952, tr. fr. Paris 1956, pp. 83-124. Per ciò che riguarda il motivo dell'uovo cosmico diremo soltanto che, mentre il Kern lo riconosce di origine puramente greca (*op. cit.*, p. 151 sg.), il Gruppe ne addita i paralleli orientali (*Die griechischen Culte*, p. 658). Sull'uovo orfico cfr. anche J. E. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, 2a ed. Cambridge 1908, pp. 625-629; A. Olivieri, *L'uovo cosmogonico degli orfici* in „Atti della R. Accademia di archeologia, lettere e belle

in ambiente orfico, su una tematica siffatta che, già presente nella cosmogonia aristofanea degli *Uccelli* (vv. 639-702)¹¹⁰, appare un motivo ricorrente nelle varie versioni teo-cosmogoniche che a quell'ambiente si attribuiscono¹¹¹).

Come nei testi indiani sopra esaminati, il tema mitico dell'uovo cosmico esprime nell'orfismo una concezione di tipo monistico-„panteistico”. Principio teogonico, oltre che cosmogonico, l'Uovo originario degli orfici contiene in sè il germe di ogni ulteriore sviluppo e alla sua apertura si ha la parallela manifestazione degli elementi cosmici e dei personaggi divini¹¹²).

(continua)

arti”, N.S., vol. VII, 1920, pp. 297-334; Guthrie, *op. cit.*, p. 109 sg.; W. Staudacher, *Die Trennung von Himmel und Erde. Ein vorgriechischer Schöpfungsmythus bei Hesiod und den Orphikern* (Phil. Diss.), Tübingen 1942, rist. Darmstadt 1968, pp. 77-121; Eliade, *Traité*, p. 427; M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, München 1961, vol. II, 2a ed., p. 684 sg.; U. Bianchi, *Dios Aisa*, Roma 1953, p. 178 sg.; Id., *Teogonie e cosmogonie*, p. 136 sg.; R. Turcan, *L'œuf orphique et les quatre éléments* in „R.H.R.”, CLX, 1 (1961), pp. 11-23; Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 377.

110) Ritenuta comunemente orfica (Gruppe, s.v. *Orpheus* in Roscher, *Lexikon*, vol. III, 1, col. 1121; Oliviero, *art. cit.*, p. 318; Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 625 sg.; Guthrie, *op. cit.*, p. 108 sg.; Nilsson, *op. cit.*, p. 685; Turcan, *op. cit.*, p. 11; cfr. Staudacher, *op. cit.*, p. 80, pp. 110-114) è dal Koster considerata piuttosto come il frutto della immaginazione di Aristofane (*Le mythe de Platon, de Zarathoustra et des Chaldéens*, „Mnemosyne”, Suppl. III, Leiden 1951, p. 33 n. 1). Pari riserve, che in vero appaiono eccessive (cfr. Bianchi, *Orfeo e l'Orfismo nell'epoca classica* in „S.M.S.R.”, XXVIII, 11, 1957, p. 155 sg.) in L. Moulinier, *Orphée et l'orphisme à l'époque classique*, Paris 1955, pp. 94-97.

111) Secondo la cosiddetta *Teogonia rapsodica* apud Damascio, *De principiis*, 123, 1 (cfr. *ib.*, 55 = O. Kern, *Orphicorum Fragmenta*, Berlin 1922, rist. 1972 fr. 70; Proclo, in *Plat. Tim.*, 30 c. d = Kern, fr. 79) Chronos forma nell'Etere un uovo che, aprendosi, fa uscire Phanes, detto anche *Protogonos*, al cui apparire le regioni inferiori si separano dall'Etere. La funzione cosmogonica dell'uovo, appare affermata con maggiore chiarezza nella versione riferita da Atenagora (*Pro christianis*, 18 = Kern, fr. 57; cfr. *Pro christianis* 20 = fr. 58), che peraltro risulta più vicina alla dottrina che lo stesso Damascio attribuisce a Ieronimo ed Ellanico (*De principiis*, 123 bis = Kern, fr. 54). Sul personaggio di *Protogonos* cfr. U. Bianchi, *Protogonos, Aspetti dell'idea di Dio nelle religioni esoteriche dell'antichità* in „S.M.S.R.” XXVIII, 2 (1957), pp. 115-133.

112) Secondo la notizia di Damascio, Epimenide cretese (VII sec. av. Cr.) avrebbe elaborato una cosmogonia fondamentalmente analoga a quella orfica parimenti utilizzando la nozione dell'uovo cosmico che, prodotto dall'Aria e dalla Notte, sarà poi fonte di ogni generazione (*De principiis*, 124, ed. Ruelle, vol. I, p. 320).

GRÉGOIRE DE TOURS ET LA MAGIE BLANCHE

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K. Thomas dans son livre captivant „Religion and the Decline of Magic” dit: „C. G. Loomis, *White Magic, An Introduction to the Folklore of Christian Legend* (Cambridge, Mass. 1948) provides a useful analysis of the miraculous content of the Saints’ *Lives*”¹⁾. En ce qui concerne un tout petit passage de l’oeuvre de Loomis j’ai pourtant des réserves et c’est bien le passage sur la signification de Grégoire de Tours pour l’histoire de la magie blanche.

Ma première objection se porte sur le jugement: „In the following century, Gregory of Tours in his *Liber de miraculis, De gloria martyrum*, and *Historia Francorum* established the wonder cult”²⁾. Cela me semble une exagération de l’importance de Grégoire qui n’a fait que décrire une situation existante.

Grégoire (538-594) fut tout simplement entraîné par le courant des croyances des populations du cinquième siècle dans le territoire des Mérovingiens. Dans ce courant la sainteté fut de plus en plus l’attribut de l’évêque dans l’opinion des populations qui décernent ce titre à ceux qu’elles jugent le mériter. Ce sont eux dont l’influence après leur mort continuera à les protéger avec une efficacité encore plus certaine³⁾. La Gaule n’avait guère produit que 54 saints dont 52 évêques au IV^e siècle. Avec le V^e siècle le mouvement acquiert un rythme rapide. La Gaule produit 175 saints dont 123 évêques et 8 abbés. Puis prenant plus d’ampleur, le nombre des saints s’élève au VI^e siècle à 293 dont 148 évêques et, indice d’une évolution dans

1) Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic. Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England*, London 1971, p. 25, Bibliographical Note.

2) C. Grant Loomis, *White Magic, An Introduction to the Folklore of Christian Legend*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1948, p. 8.

3) Henry François Muller, *L’époque mérovingienne. Essai de synthèse de philologie et d’histoire*, New York 1945, p. 82.

l'organisation de la vie sociale, 45 abbés et 8 abbesses ⁴⁾). Au cinquième siècle trois évêques sont canonisés en Tours et au sixième siècle aussi ⁵⁾).

Il semble que pour le peuple, tout évêque, abbé, abbesse qui a mené une vie charitable et édifiante a le don des miracles après sa fin, ou même de son vivant, et, par suite, mérite un culte. C'est comme un honoriat qu'on ne saurait refuser ⁶⁾).

A côté de l'influence des croyances des populations on peut constater l'influence de la littérature d'autrefois sur Grégoire. Sous ce rapport aussi il a été entraîné par le courant du cinquième siècle. Bernoulli dit: In den gallischen Heiligenleben aus dem fünften Jahrhundert ist die Form der Panegyriker nicht wie bei Sever, litterarischer, sondern rhetorischer Natur. Es sind Reden, Lobreden, und da es sich um ein kirchliches Gedächtnis handelt, Predigten ⁷⁾). So hat denn von Gallien ausgehend und in Ennodius gipfelnd die Manieriertheit des römischen Rhetorentums mit allen Unarten und Verkünstelungen ebenfalls in die beginnende litterarische Heiligenindustrie ihren Einzug gehalten. Irgend ein hochwürdiger Bischof erhebt, selbst durch den Mangel an Thatsachen nicht abgehalten, seinen Schützling in den Himmel ⁸⁾).

Auch die Heiligenmemorie, noch ein Erzeugnis des römischen Geistes, war als litterarische Gattung erstarkt und ausgebildet, bevor die junge fränkische Kultur diesen geistigen Betriebszweig übernahm und einstweilen als den einzigen ihr litterarisch möglichen weiterpflegte ⁹⁾). Für die Abfassung der Hilariusvita des Fortunats steht das Jahrzehnt 565 bis 575 zur Verfügung. Diese Hilariuswunderthaten sind vielleicht das früheste selbständige Beispiel dieser hagiographischer Schriftstellerei, die sich nicht mit den lebenden, sondern mit den toten Heiligen beschäftigt ¹⁰⁾). Fortunat ist der Vorläufer des grösseren Gregors geworden, der sich in seine Bescheidenheit selber nur wie ein Nachtreter Fortunats vorkam ¹¹⁾).

D'ailleurs, l'intérêt de Grégoire pour Martin est relié à la tendance

4) *Ibid.*, p. 83.

5) *Ibid.*, p. 84 note 38.

6) Ferdinand Lot, *Naissance de la France*, Paris 1948, p. 247.

7) Carl Albrecht Bernoulli, *Die Heiligen der Merowinger*, Tübingen 1900, p. 36.

8) *Ibid.*, p. 46.

9) *Ibid.*, p. 73.

10) *Ibid.*, p. 77.

11) *Ibid.*, p. 88.

de placer les martyrs à côté des saints apôtres, procédé qui au quatrième siècle pénétrait de l'Orient dans l'Occident¹²). Bref, on peut constater partout l'influence d'autrefois sur Grégoire.

Comme Martin de Tours sur terre prêtait son assistance céleste, Grégoire l'a vu comme le saint spécial pour le monde entier (*Martin*. IV, prol.: *toto orbi peculiari patrono Martino*). Il doit avoir été difficile de savoir si le saint prêtait son assistance à un certain endroit déjà de son vivant ou après sa mort. J'admets alors que Grégoire et d'autres ont été de bonne foi en agrandissant le domaine de l'action de Martin. Et il me semble possible d'y voir une preuve indirecte que la position élevée de Martin était un fait avant l'entrée en scène de Grégoire. Car les récits de Grégoire de Tours prétendent que Martin a porté ses pas en Auvergne, en Saintonge, et jusqu' autour de Bordeaux. Les témoignages des contemporains, ceux de Sulpice Sévère et de Paulin de Nole, nous le montrent prêchant et faisant des miracles dans le Berry, à Levroux, à Chartres, à Paris, à Trèves, au Luxembourg, à Sens, dans la vallée du Rhône, à Vienne et à Autun¹³).

Continuateur des choses existantes, Grégoire l'était aussi du point de vue professionnel. Son premier livre traitait des miracles qui se produisaient auprès du tombeau de Martin. Au cinquième siècle déjà on tenait un registre de ces miracles. Lors de l'évêque Perpetuus cette liste comptait seize numéros. Paulin de Périgueux s'en est inspiré en écrivant le sixième livre de son poème sur Martin¹⁴). Aussi Grégoire lui-même dit qu'il a composé ses livres pour faire connaître davantage le pouvoir magique des saints afin de contribuer à la vénération de Saint Martin (*Martin*. II, 19 *historia quae ad aedificationem Ecclesiae pertinet; ut et virtutem beati Antistitis prodat*)¹⁵).

Aussi Carrias constate-t-il avec raison: la légende et la liturgie de Martin existaient à Tours avant Grégoire et l'ordre dans lequel il les rapporte est vraisemblablement fortuit¹⁶). Par exemple le calendrier, reproduit au dernier chapitre de *l'Historia Francorum* paraît constitué de deux listes juxtaposées, et que différencie la nature de leurs fêtes,

12) *Ibid.*, p. 2.

13) J. J. Hatt, *Histoire de la Gaule Romaine*, Paris 1959, p. 332.

14) Bernoulli, pp. 89, 90.

15) *Ibid.*, p. 91.

16) Michel Carrias, *Étude sur la formation de deux légendes hagiographiques à l'époque mérovingienne*, dans „Revue d'histoire de l'église de France”, Paris 1972, Tome LVIII, p. 16.

ainsi, semble-t-il, qu'un double déroulement chronologique, dont le point de départ n'est même pas identique 17).

On sait même dans quelle période la légende et la liturgie de Martin ont subi une grande extension. En 461, lorsque Perpétue devint évêque de Tours, la tombe du confesseur Martin se trouvait encore dans une modeste basilique funéraire, une *cellula*, qui ne lui était peut-être pas dédiée. Avec Perpétue les signes ne manquent pas pour montrer que ce culte prend son essor 18). Et au VI^e siècle en effet, le culte des saints était bien établi et la possession de leurs reliques, réellement et très largement recherchée 19). Gregorius ne fit que décrire une situation existante.

Ma deuxième objection se porte sur la pensée que Grégoire aurait pratiqué la magie blanche. Loomis donne les arguments suivants: We shall survey the realm of the white magician, of the willer to good, of the saints and of the good men of the Christian world. The attachment of miracles to the progenitors of Christianity was a rather slow process, despite the records of benevolent magic in the *Gospels* and in the *Old Testament* 20). Most miracles deal with the cure of human infirmities. The cures are usually effected directly by faith in the saintly intercessor. All miracles of this kind belong to faith and leave no additional ingredient for comparison. All saints effect cures of various diseases in answer to the prayers of the believers. If, however, the sick man steps beyond the pale of simple prayer and by some formula or by some additional action on his part attempts to strengthen his plea, he shares differentiated human formulas which serve to approach the deity. For instance, the mixture of earth from a saint's grave in a potion, the touching of relics, and the wearing of talismans and holy objects, all imply a participation in actions which are beyond simple faith. Such formulas, whatever their manifestations, can be compared among all peoples, for all folk possess similar lore 21).

Magic is neither good nor evil in itself, for of itself it has no will. Magic is an operative force which has no prescribed intention, for magic in itself knows neither *maleficium* nor *beneficium* 22). The

17) *Ibid.*, p. 15.

18) *Ibid.*, p. 8.

19) *Ibid.*, p. 9.

20) Loomis, p. 7.

21) *Ibid.*, p. 9.

22) *Ibid.*, p. 3.

agent to whom magical powers are ascribed in a primitive state of society may use his art both for good and for evil, depending upon whether he has the unselfish desire to promote the good of his community, or whether his own wishes interpose upon his will ²³). The evil or good intention lies in the heart of the operator.

Magic is a practice which seeks to turn events or to control nature in an unnatural and unexpected fashion. Magic implies the operation of forces beyond the normal sequences of experience. Magic suggests aid from sources lying in the unseen and in the unknown. Magic is knowledge beyond the average man's comprehension; it is a secret mastering influence which inspires wonder or fear. To magic have been attributed the unexpected good or the unlooked-for evil which may befall a man ²⁴).

Alors suit le passage sur Grégoire: The saints are bearers of miracles, the signs and symbols of white magic ²⁵). "In the following century, Gregory of Tours in his *Liber de miraculis*, *De gloria martyrum*, and *Historia Francorum* established the wonder cult. The four books of Dialogues of Gregory the Great stamped authoritatively the recognition of white magic" ²⁶).

Cette magie blanche, moi, je ne peux pas la constater chez Grégoire. En premier lieu il n'y a pas la situation sociale et économique qu'il faut. L'historien Thomas a étudié les procès contre les sorcières au seizième et dix-septième siècles du point de vue social et économique. Il tire cette conclusion: "Two essential features thus made up the background to most of the allegations of witchcraft levied in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. The first was the occurrence of a personal misfortune for which no natural explanation was immediately forthcoming. The second was an awareness on the victim's part of having given offence to a neighbour, usually by having failed to discharge some hitherto customary social obligation" ²⁷).

Il est remarquable de voir comment un autre Anglais — lui donc également un habitant du pays où la magie se cultive encore au XX^e siècle d'une façon intense — arrive déjà plus tôt à des conclusions

23) *Ibid.*, p. 4.

24) *Ibid.*, p. 3.

25) *Ibid.*, p. 7.

26) *Ibid.*, p. 8.

27) Keith Thomas, p. 557.

semblables sur les temps mérovingiens. Une thèse de Brown est la suivante: "that a precise *malaise* in the structure of the governing classes of the Roman Empire (especially in its eastern, Greek-speaking half) forced the ubiquitous beliefs of ancient man to a flesh-point of accusations in the mid-fourth century A.D. The incidence of these accusations synchronizes with changes within the structure of the governing class: thus they reach a peak at a time of maximum uncertainty and conflict in the 'new' society of the mid-fourth century. They are substantially reduced as occasions for conflict and uncertainty are progressively restricted, by a growth of political and social stability, whose results are best documented for the sixth century A.D. — the age of Justinian and of the first 'barbarian' kingdoms in the West" 28).

"In the West, the triumph of the great landowners ensured that senatorial blood, episcopal office, and sanctity presented a formidable united front: any form of uncontrolled religious power received short shrift in the circle of Gregory of Tours (for instance *Hist. Franc.* VIII, 34; IX, 6; X, 25)" 29).

"By the sixth century the image of the divine world had become exceedingly stable. Angels were the courtiers and bureaucrats of a remote Heavenly Emperor, and the saints, the *patroni*, the 'protectors', whose efficacious interventions at court channelled the benefits of a just autocrat to individuals and localities. In the late sixth and early seventh century, sorcery is more often punished by the direct intervention of these divine governors: the sorcerer receives short shrift, as a traitor from a well-regimented celestial society (Moschus, *Pratum spirituale* c. 145, Latin translation in *Patrol. Lat.* 74, 192; Evagrius, *Hist. Eccl.* V. 18 — the Virgin appears in dreams, demanding vengeance against "traitors" to Her Son)" 30).

C'est pourquoi l'église médiévale s'est opposée toujours à la magie. Thomas constate: "The Church was otherworldly in its main preoccupations. Most of the magical claims made for religion were parasitic to its teaching, and were more or less vigorously refuted by ecclesiastical leaders. Indeed our very knowledge of many of these superstitions is

28) Peter Brown, *Sorcery, Demons and the Rise of Christianity: from late Antiquity into the Middle Ages* dans „Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine", London 1972, pp. 122, 123.

29) *Ibid.*, p. 131.

30) *Ibid.*, p. 142.

due to the medieval theologians and Church Councils who denounced them" ³¹).

Le christianisme marqua d'une réprobation toutes les pratiques magiques, et ne cessa de les interdire, tant dans les canons des conciles et les articles des pénitentiels que dans les écrits des théologiens ³²). C'est pour cela que je crois que mon objection contre la position de Grégoire de Tours dans l'oeuvre de Loomis pourra être partagée par Thomas qui lui-même a exprimé la résistance de l'église médiévale en général à la magie.

Dans la magie il s'agit généralement des choses suivantes: Par des gestes déterminés et des paroles rituelles, l'homme croit possible, en vertu de la sympathie qui lie les êtres de l'univers, d'incliner en sa faveur les Puissances qui le régissent ³³). Il me paraît difficile de retrouver ce schéma dans la bible. Sous ce rapport je pense à la sympathie qui lie les êtres de l'univers devant la différence essentielle entre Dieu et l'homme, Créateur et création. Ou aux puissances qui régissent l'homme devant Dieu qui est au-dessus des puissances et qui les combat parfois par la voie de ses saints.

J'aimerais dire avec Bernoulli: „Hören wir darüber den Bischof von Tours: 'Die Wunder, die unser Herr Gott durch den seligen Martin, seinen einst im Fleisch wandelnden Diener ins Werk zu setzen geruhte, lässt er täglich zur Stärkung des Vertrauens der Gläubigen sich wiederholen; denn jetzt stattet er dessen Grabhübel genau mit denselben Kraftthaten aus, die jener ausführte, als er auf Erden war. Wer wird nun noch an den früheren Wundern zweifeln, wenn er die Gnadengeschenke der gegenwärtigen Zeichen sich mitteilen sieht, wenn er sieht, wie Lahme sich aufrichten, Blinde das Augenlicht wieder finden, die Geister von den Besessenen ausfahren und jede andere Art von Krankheit durch die Mittlerschaft des Heiligen geheilt wird' (*Mart. I praef.*) ³⁴). Dieu est donc celui qui

³¹) Thomas, p. 46.

³²) Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, *Survivance de la magie antique* Band I *Antike und Orient im Mittelalter*, dans „Miscellanea mediaevalia", Berlin 1962, p. 154.

³³) *Ibid.*, p. 154.

³⁴) Bernoulli, p. 287: (PL 71) *Miracula illa quae Dominus Deus noster per beatum Martinum antistitem suum in corpore positum operari dignatus est, quotidie ad corroborandam fidem credentium confirmare dignatur. Ille nunc exornans virtutibus ejus tumultum, qui in eo operatus est cum esset in mundo; et ille praebebat per eum beneficia Christianis, qui misit tunc praesulem gentibus*

produisait les miracles de Martin. Et c'est pourquoi revient au saint une place purement secondaire.

On peut constater la même chose dans l'oeuvre capitale de Grégoire: Il est clair que l'*Historia Francorum* remet la décision d'intervention sur terre tout à Dieu. Il peut envoyer des saints ou des anges pour exécuter Sa volonté. Tout en prenant des décisions divines les apôtres peuvent, avec leur intercession, faire autorité plus qu'un diacre comme Etienne ou un évêque comme Martin. L'hierarchie ecclésiastique se prolonge dans le ciel. Les saints sont invoqués de préférence auprès de leurs „*memoriae*” ou après de leurs reliques transportées. La présence à différents endroits et en différents temps n'est plus un problème, mais présente une réalité de la foi éprouvée immédiatement³⁵). C'est pourquoi Kötting fait remarquer: „Immer dann schon von Aberglauben zu reden, wenn die Menschen bei ihren religiösen Äußerungen, vor allem in Bittgebet, bei den vordergründigen Mittlern stehen bleiben und des letzten Urhebers nicht betont Erwähnung tun, ist nicht zulässig”. „Im Vergleich zu diesen Praktiken mag sich die Heilung am Wallfahrtsort in der Anwendung der Mittel nicht viel von diesen unterscheiden, in der Zurückführung der Heilkraft der Mittel auf den Heiligen und über ihn auf Gott steht die Übung der Pilger am Wallfahrtsort ethisch gesehen hoch über den anderen, die sich auf Magie und Beschwörung stützen”³⁶).

La position des saints des Francs rendait inutile l'invocation d'anges. Par-ci, par-là on s'est mis à prier les anges au lieu des saints (*Conf. I*). Et Michel, celui qui parmi les trois archanges de Grégoire le Grand opère des miracles, se manifeste chez Grégoire de Tours d'abord timidement, mais plus tard comme l'égal des saints des Francs³⁷).

Et en ce qui concerne l'élément matériel chez Grégoire, le signe de la croix et l'invocation du nom d'un saint sont du même ordre d'idées. Leur influence est exactement comme celle des reliques. Tandis que souvent dans un grand incendie pour combattre le feu

perituris. Nemo ergo de anteactis virtutibus dubitet, cum praesentium signorum cernit munera dispensari, cum videt claudos erigi, caecos illuminari, daemones effugari, et alia quaeque morborum genera ipso medicante curari.

35) L. J. van der Lof, *De san Agustín a san Gregorio de Tours. Sobre la intervención de los mártires*, dans „Augustinus”, Madrid 1974, p. 43.

36) Bernhard Kötting, *Peregrinatio religiosa. Wallfahrten in der Antike und das Pilgerwesen in der alten Kirche*, Regensburg-Münster (Westf.), 1950, p. 274.

37) Bernoulli, p. 316.

on exhibait des reliques, dans un cas pareil le peuple rassemblé de Bordeaux priaît Martin et arrivait de la sorte à l'extinction des flammes (*Martin*. IV, 47). Aussi crois-je que Kötting parle à bon droit d'une nécessité relative d'un substrat matériel: „In dem Glauben an die relative Notwendigkeit eines materiellen Substrates sind die Christen zu Gregor's Zeit Kinder der allgemeinen Anschauungen ihrer Epoche" 38).

Toute cette situation sera le résultat du caractère particulier de la christianisation des Francs. Pour eux il n'y a pas eu de traduction de la Bible, comme pour les Goths. Même pas après Chlodwig! Christianisation est donc incidemment un mot d'une signification différente dans le développement de la foi parmi les peuples qui ont envahi l'empire romain 39). Des traditions locales en Gaule ont joué pour les Francs un grand rôle.

Pour les Francs la sainteté voulait dire être animé de puissances célestes. L'intention du porteur ne pouvait changer en rien la valeur objective de ces puissances. Ces puissances peuvent bien devenir les ennemies de quelqu'un en cas d'irrégion et de crime, aussi bien qu'elles deviennent un appui des croyants et des hommes de bonnes moeurs. „Wer vertrauensvoll im Falle der Not seine Zuflucht an der Heiligenstätte sucht, den liebt der Heilige; wer sich dagegen an der Kirchenhabe vergreift oder den Heiligen sonst belästigt oder beleidigt, den haszt er" 40). „Der Amulet war auf würdelose Aufführung ebenso empfindlich, wie die Reliquie selbst und rächte pietätlose Behandlung" 41). Il'y avait l'incident de la relique de St Serge dont le comte Mummulus s'emparait brutalement dans la maison d'un Syrien de Bordeaux pour être victorieux à la guerre. Grégoire ajoutait: *credo non erat acceptum martyri* 42).

Chez Grégoire le saint est toujours le serviteur de l'Être Suprême dont la puissance opère les miracles. A l'homme il n'appartient que croyance et pénitence. Cet élément pastoral produit un tout autre climat que le monde de la magie. Une étude des attitudes que Grégoire de

38) Kötting, p. 274.

39) Von den Steinen, dans *Settimane di studio del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo*, Spoleto 1967, p. 492.

40) Bernoulli, p. 249.

41) *Ibid.*, pp. 265, 266.

42) Muller, p. 82 note 35.

Tours demande à ses fidèles d'adopter au tombeau du saint et celles qu'il leur propose d'imiter, permet de rentrer davantage dans la pastorale de l'évêque du val de Loire ⁴³). Ce qui frappe d'abord, c'est l'insistance avec laquelle l'évêque de Tours attire l'attention de ses lecteurs sur la foi qui doit animer les fidèles au tombeau de saint Martin. A travers les recueils de miracles, l'évêque de Tours s'efforce-t-il d'aller au delà d'une simple narration. Plus au moins consciemment peut-être, mais réellement cependant, ne serait-ce que par imitation, l'éducation de la foi des lecteurs des livres des miracles s'accomplit peu à peu ⁴⁴).

"A côté de la foi, les attitudes pénitentielles occupent également une place très importante dans les recueils de miracles de saint Martin. Les analyses que nous en avons faites éclairent toute une pastorale de la pénitence. L'institution pénitentielle ancienne est en déclin, pratiquement délaissée; la pénitence tarifée n'est pas encore implantée sur le continent. En un certain sens, il y a un vide institutionnel. Devant une telle situation, que fait Grégoire de Tours? Trop heureux est-il s'il peut faire prendre à ses fidèles une vraie attitude de pénitent!" ⁴⁵).

A tout prendre, il me semble évident que chez Grégoire nous vivons dans un monde tout différent de celui de la magie. C'est l'attitude impérative qui distingue la magie de la religion ⁴⁶). Dans la magie l'homme passe à l'offensive contre les choses ou bien il remplit dans le grand concert des esprits le rôle de chef d'orchestre (S. Reinach). Dans la magie on constate les premiers symptômes que l'homme sent sa valeur (K. Th. Preuss). C'est bien différent de ce que nous constatons dans l'oeuvre de Grégoire de Tours.

43) J. Schlick, *Composition et chronologie des „De virtutibus sancti Martini” de Grégoire de Tours*, dans „Studia Patristica” Vol. VII, Berlin 1966, p. 281.

44) *Ibid.*, p. 281.

45) *Ibid.*, pp. 281, 282.

46) G. van der Leeuw, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstgeschiedenis*, Haarlem 1924, p. 134.

COMMUNICATION

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY
OF RELIGIONS

XIIITH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
UNIVERSITY OF LANCASTER, ENGLAND

15th-22nd August, 1975

The XIIITH International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions will be held at the University of Lancaster, England, from 15th to 22nd August 1975. Scholars specializing in the history of religions are invited to attend this congress. It will be divided into the customary specialist areas, and as well as the normal conference papers, there will be an opportunity to present shorter research reports and accounts of projects in progress. Accommodation will be almost entirely on the University campus, but delegates wishing to stay in hotel rooms will be able to do so.

The University of Lancaster, established in 1961, is situated 23 miles north of London on the west coast of England. The nearest airport is at Manchester and there are main-line rail connections with London and other major centres.

Fuller information will be distributed in due course. Anyone wishing to make a provisional booking is invited to write to the I.A.H.R. Secretariat, Department of Religious Studies, Cartmel College, Bailrigg, Lancaster LA1 4YL, England.

May 1974

Eric J. SHARPE
Acting Secretary General, I.A.H.R.

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